

Caroline Adams

Caroline Brooke.
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THE
W I F E.

By M I R A,

One of the Authors of the FEMALE SPECTATOR,
and EPISTLES FOR LADIES.

The THIRD EDITION.



L O N D O N :

Printed for H. GARDNER, at Cowley's Head, facing
St. Clement's Church, in the Strand.

M.DCC.LXXIII.

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One of the Authors of the FEMALE SPECTATOR,
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Printed by M. GARDNER, at George's Head, facing
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THE WIFE.

BOOK I.

INTRODUCTION.

MARRIAGE was the first institution of the Great Author of nature, and intended to smoothe the rugged ways of life ; — the softener of the husband's cares ; — the bulwark of the wife's innocence ; — the cement of friendship between families, and the choicest blessing Heaven could bestow on mortals.

Who then can, unconcerned, behold this glorious benefit perverted, — the blissful union of hearts dissolved, and the hands, perhaps but lately join'd, struggling

gling with the chains that bind them to each other ; — discord and confusion in the place of love and harmony ; — and this too not always occasioned by the vices of either party, — (for I speak not to the profligate and abandoned) — but by some unaccountable caprice, — some unguarded folly, which I should think those guilty of, need only be told of to reform ?

The least disagreement between two persons, who ought to be actuated but by one soul, should be check'd in its very beginning ; for if the perverse humour, of what kind soever it be, is once indulg'd, the breach will still grow wider, and must be of fatal consequence, not only to their peace, but also to their interest and reputation.

I shall not enter into any discussion whether, whenever contention happens between persons thus united, the husband or the wife will most frequently appear blameable ; — but of this I am certain, that which soever of them begins the dispute, the other is equally culpable in continuing it.

Too many of both parties, indeed, stand in much need of admonition ; but

as

as law and custom have given the superiority to the men, it is doubtless the duty as well as interest of every wife, who would preserve the affection of her husband, to be constantly assiduous about two things;—first, by a prudent watchfulness over his temper and her own actions, to avoid whatever might create in him a disgust; — and secondly, to endeavour, by a soft and endearing behaviour, to win, and, as it were, steal him from those errors to which he may possibly be addicted, and which his pride, perhaps, would not suffer him to be reason'd out of.

I have therefore thrown together some few hints, which, if improved into practice, I think, cannot fail of restoring to marriage that true honour and felicity which reigned in the first ages of the world; but has ever since been gradually decreasing, till so far depraved and lost as to render the sacred ordinance contemptible in the eyes of many, and entered into by most merely to gratify one or other of the two very worst passions that can actuate the human mind,—lust and avarice.

Some of my fair readers may perhaps imagine, that in some points I attempt to

impose too hard a task upon them; — at first, indeed, it may appear so; — but let them reflect on the vast emolument, the accumulated benefits, attending the performance; — a very small part of the time wasted by a woman of quality at her toilet, or by those of the meaner class in a gossip's tale, if devoted to serious consideration, will be sufficient to convince their reason, and make them look on nothing as a difficulty that tends to the promoting the happiness of their whole lives, and that of the person to whom they are united.

I know it will be said by those who are no favourers of the sex, that, in an age like this, when modesty, with every native virtue of the female mind, is treated as ridiculous, and a bold licentious manner of behaviour is the chief requisite to constitute a reigning toast, small encouragement will be given to a work of the nature I propose; and that one might as well expect to regain lost paradise on this side the grave, as to bring women back to the innocence and simplicity of former times; — yet, in spite of all these accusations, which I am sorry to say are, in the general, but too just, I hope, nay am confident, that there are a great many, a very great many, who will not suffer their

their reason to be totally swallowed up in the torrent of fashion and example; and will be therefore thankful to any one who shall warn them against those mistakes into which they might otherwise fall thro' inadvertency.

As the workings of nature are the same in all degrees of people, and the method of attaining happiness may be as easily pursued in the cottage as the palace, in order to render this work of as general utility as possible, I have aim'd more at perspicuity than elegance of stile; chusing rather to confer some benefit on others by my admonitions, than receive praises myself for the manner in which they are delivered.

S E C T. I.

Concerning the first Weeks after Marriage, vulgarly called the Honey-Moon.

I Think it is a received maxim, that the good or bad success of any thing is very much owing to the manner of our first setting out upon it; — the wife will never undertake an affair of any moment, without well considering the steps by which it is to be conducted; — marriage, therefore, which is the great business of our whole lives, — the business on which our all depends, ought chiefly to be attended to; — we then enter into a new scene of action, and every former attachment, inclination, and pleasure must subside, and give way to that infinitely more important aim of fixing our happiness where we have fixed our fate.

The smallest mistake in the beginning of marriage costs a long time to rectify, and is often irretrievable; — a disgust once taken is scarce ever thoroughly worn off; endeavours for that purpose, for the most part, serve but to increase it,

it, and expose the person to contempt;
—so true are the poet's words:

‘To love once past we cannot backward
move;

‘Call yesterday again, and I may love.’

There is a certain delicacy of behaviour which it behoves every bride to observe towards her husband; a too great shyness, and an over-fondness in receiving his endearments, are equally dangerous to that esteem she will afterwards find it necessary to have inspired him with; — the one he will be apt to look upon as proceeding either from affectation or the want of love; — the other will soon satiate, and then infallibly become troublesome; — a modest yielding, a soft compliance with what he has a right to expect — all beyond that, while it flatters his vanity, diminishes his respect.

Both these extremes, having a natural tendency to create indifference in the end, ought to be carefully avoided by a new-married woman; — the first, if persever'd in for any length of time, may make her husband suspect that the coldness she treats him with is occasion'd by a too great warmth of affection for some other man; — the second, besides the inconve-

nience already mentioned, might raise in him some diffidence of her power of resisting a temptation, whenever any should fall in her way, to the prejudice of his honour:—thus might the same effect be produced by either of the two most opposite causes in the world; jealousy, the most dreadful of all the passions, springs alike from each.

Not coy, nor yet profusely kind, is, therefore, my advice to all who become brides, in what station of life soever they may be placed by fortune:—I would have the husband firmly persuaded that his wife has a great fund of tenderness in her heart; but would have no room given him to entertain a thought that she has so much in her composition as to make her able to bestow the least portion of it on any other than himself.

This is all I shall say in regard of her behaviour towards him in private:—in publick, when they receive the visits and congratulations of their friends, I would have her treat him no otherwise than she did some days before their marriage;—with the company an easy freedom will become her best; a sheepish, downcast look will make her appear awkward and ridiculous;—too bold and assuming an
air

air may subject her to censure ;—let the inward satisfaction at the change of her condition glow on her cheeks and sparkle in her eyes ; but let her tongue keep a modest reserve, and drop no hint that may give the least room for such replies as would call a blush upon her face.

Nothing, certainly, can be more deservedly the jest of the town, than that apish fondness we sometimes see between persons lately wedded. I once knew a couple, who, when they first saw company on that occasion, could look only on each other ;——in the midst of conversation would alternately start up and snatch a kiss ; —— instead of answering what was said, he either play'd with her fingers or patted her neck ; — she return'd the favour with another on his cheek, crying at the same time, — ‘ Go, you little naughty man, why will you make me love you so ?’ — To which he reply'd, — ‘ Go, you little naughty woman, why are you so pretty ?’ — The young ladies who were present blushed, hung down their heads, and knew not which way to cast their eyes ; — the married women could not forbear drawing up their mouths into a contemptuous smile, perhaps guessing in what manner all this billing and cooing would end ; — all the

men sneer'd, and those who were addicted to raillery thought themselves under no obligation to restrain their talent.

The happy day which had joined this pair was scarce six weeks elapsed, when lo! behold a most terrible reverse! — the hurry of their fond passion was over; — dalliance was no more; — kisses and embraces were now succeeded by fighting, scratching, and endeavouring to tear out each other's eyes; — the lips that before could utter only, — My dear, — my life, — my soul, — my treasure, now poured forth nothing but invectives; — they took as little care to conceal the proofs of their animosity as they had done to moderate those of a contrary emotion; — they were continually quarrelling; — their house was a Babel of confusion; — no servant would stay with them a week; — they were shunned by their most intimate friends, and despis'd by all their acquaintance; 'till at last they mutually resolved to agree in one point, which was, to be separated for ever from each other.

This, or something like it, will ever be the case when that love which brings two people together is not establish'd by a prudent and discreet behaviour; — the most ardent passion, to be maintained in
its

its pristine and full vigour, after a free and unlimited enjoyment of the object, stands in need of being well supported by esteem; and what sort of esteem a man can have for a woman, whose conduct his reason makes him disapprove, and whom he looks upon but as a pretty toy, fit only for his amusement, not as a jewel the lustre of which reflects honour on the possessor, may easily enough be guess'd at, from observing the fate of transient, unwarrantable amours, which, like meteors, blaze fiercely for a while, then sink at once, and dissolve in smoke and vapours.

If therefore a wife, by any unguarded folly, debases the dignity of her character as such, and forfeits the respect of her husband, she puts herself upon a level with a little kept mistress; — nay, is yet more unhappy, as the worst than can befall a mistress is to be turn'd off by a man who no longer loves her, and whom perhaps she never lov'd, and is then at liberty to receive the addresses of another; but a wife is bound by an indissoluble tie to pass her whole days with one whom her duty bids her love, and whose indifference forces her to hate.

As there is no such thing as perfection to be found in human nature, and

the very best and sweetest disposition may have something in it, some little peculiarity, which, like a jarring string, if touch'd upon, spoils the harmony of the whole, one may possibly give offence without being sensible one does so; — nay, even when most assiduous to oblige: — it would therefore be well, methinks, for a woman in the first weeks of her marriage to be diligent in discovering the foible, or what is called the blind side of her husband, to the end she may be able hereafter to fall in with his humour; than which there is nothing more endears one person to another.

I would not here be understood that a woman should yield a slavish submission to every unaccountable caprice and whim of the man to whom she is married; or on any score give up her reason and judgment to do him pleasure; — no, that might perhaps be to sin against a more supreme authority than what the law has conferred on him; — I would only have her seem to think as he does in trifling and insignificant matters, and endeavour to be silent and passive in those of greater importance.

I know very well, that by the greatest part of the sex this will be thought too much;

much ; — yet how would a wife be avail'd by a contrary behaviour ? — Man is naturally impatient of contradiction ; — imagines himself endued with a superior reason ; and tho' he probably may be inwardly convinced by her arguments, and conscious he is in the wrong, will never be brought to acknowledge he is so ; but will chuse to persist in his errors, rather than suffer her to think his departing from them the effect of her remonstrances.

It would be utterly impossible to enumerate the many causes, or imaginary causes, which give occasion for disputes between husbands and wives ; so I shall make mention only of those which most frequently happen, are generally of the worst consequence, and therefore ought chiefly to be guarded against.

S E C T. II.

Difference of Opinion in Matters of Religion.

THERE are two things which people think they can never be too zealous in asserting; — these are, — First, the principles; or, to speak more justly, the mode of that religion they profess: — Secondly, the cause or party they espouse, and take to be right, in national affairs. — The one is called, being steadfast in the faith; — the other, public spirit, and the true *amor patriæ*.

Now, though both these are virtues, which it is to be wished were more generally practis'd; yet, like all other virtues, they may be, and frequently are, carry'd to an excess; for which reason I am always sorry when I see two persons, who differ strongly in them, yoked together in marriage, as there are few cases in which it is more difficult to preserve any sincere affection between themselves, or peace in their families.

On

On coming home from their several places of divine worship, seldom shall we see them meet in perfect good humour; — each, secretly condemning the folly and obstinacy of the other, is very apt to throw out reflections and sarcasms, which being returned, occasion the most bitter altercations, and sometimes kindle up an unextinguishable rancour in the heart either of the one or the other.

Thus does a mistaken piety and zeal, in the defence of what they think the best religion, utterly destroy the true end of all religion; — love, unity, and peace: — and here I cannot forbear recommending a few lines of the late Mr. Row, which, though taken from a play, afford an excellent lesson to all bigots and enthusiasts:

‘ Look round, how Providence bestows

‘ alike

‘ Sunshine and rain, to bless the fruitful

‘ year;

‘ On diff’rent nations, all of diff’rent

‘ faiths;

‘ And (tho’ by several names and titles

‘ worship’d,)

‘ Heav’n takes the various tribute of their

‘ praise;

‘ Since

' Since all agree to own, at least to
' mean,

' One best, one greatest, only Lord of
' All,

The invectives and scurrilities with which people, of almost all persuasions, too frequently load those who are of a contrary way of thinking, are indeed very scandalous and provoking :— What then can a wife do in such a circumstance ?— Must she sit silent and content, to hear the only path, which in her soul she believes leads to Heaven, ridicul'd and vilified ; and, by not opposing, seem to take part with the defamer, because he is her husband ? — No ; — I am far from enjoining, or, even approving a passiveness which must render her guilty of wronging her conscience, how misguided soever it may happen to be ; — I would only advise her to avoid declaiming against the opinion he maintains ; and then I think she may, and ought to vindicate her own, by all the arguments she is able to bring, provided she urges them with meekness and moderation.

But if it is difficult to find two persons, who differ only in the forms of religion, live together in concord ; how much more so, nay, how next to impossible is it,

it, where there is a great deal of religion on the one side, and none at all on the other?

To do justice to the fair sex, it must be confess'd that there are, at least as yet, much fewer freethinkers among them than among the men:—How therefore must a woman of strict piety and virtue tremble when she hears that sacred name, on which her whole hopes of future happiness depend, blasphemed and scoffed at, — the awful mysteries of salvation treated as a farce, — the preachers of it as impostors, — and all this by the man whom duty and inclination oblige her to regard with the greatest tenderness?

In this unhappy situation, I should, however, think it best for a wife to forbear making any attempts to convince her unbelieving husband; — tho' this at first may seem too great a lukewarmness in the cause of Heaven, yet may the most pious be reconciled to it, when they consider that freethinking, which indeed is only a softer term for atheism, absolutely denies all testimony of conviction, — laughs at faith, — calls the holy scriptures a legend of invented fables, — the apostles cheats, — and the prophets,

prophets, martyrs, and confessors, fools and madmen.

— Where pride and self-sufficiency have established this diabolical doctrine in the heart, it is in vain to hope for a conversion by any human means; — all arguments offered to that end are only answer'd with prophane jests, and serve but to harden him the more in his impiety.

The sole method, therefore, that a wife can take for the reformation of a husband of this cast is, by a well regulated conduct, and a sweetness of behaviour, to make him in love with the virtues of christianity, and to confess that the tenets delivered by the teachers of it were calculated to promote the happiness of mankind in this world at least.

And now, having said as much as is necessary, or as I think can be expected from me, on this head, I shall proceed to the next grand subject of controversy, — Party-prejudice.

S E C T. III.

Difference of Opinion in Affairs of Government.

IT seems to me, that a prudent wife will find it no hard matter to avoid entering into any disputes with her husband on the score of politics; — for, besides having it so little in her power to serve the cause she espouses, there are so few women qualified to talk on those affairs, that most of those who do, would find it much more to the reputation of their understanding to be silent.

But supposing her to be endued with an uncommon genius, — a penetrating and sound judgment, — well vers'd in history and political tracts, — able not only to talk but also to reason well on the occasion, and have infinitely the advantage over her husband, will the secret heart-burnings, discontent, and ill-humour, which, in all probability, these debates may create in him, be atoned for by the applauses her capacity may receive from others?

It

It is said by a very great and venerable author, that 'tis much better to be wise than witty; — and sure there are none, who are in reality the former, will wish to purchase the reputation of the latter at so dear an expence as innate peace of mind:—a wife, above all others, is most concerned to observe this maxim; for what satisfaction can she take in the empty compliments she receives from abroad, or the admiration of persons indifferent to her, when her own home rings with perpetual jars, and the man, in whose arms she lies, regrets the ceremony that has bound him to her?

If we give ourselves the trouble to examine into the latent sparks which kindle up this party flame, we shall find that a very small number, in comparison of the whole, that are actuated by a principle of conscience; prejudice of education,—the prospect of some advantage to themselves or families,—a partial attachment to particular persons, — resentment for some disappointment, — the vanity of making a bustle in the world and being talked of, and often a mere spirit of contradiction, makes a zealot, and equally influences both the courtier and the patriot; and how vain is it to hope to make converts of such men, who, refusing,

fusing to take justice or reason for their guide, will not be convinced by either?

Women being excluded from all public offices and employments, the men are apt to look on any attempt made by that sex to intermeddle with affairs of state, as an encroachment on their prerogative; and, indeed, I think it must be allow'd, that she who busies herself too much that way somewhat transgresses the bounds of her own sphere: the unmarried, however, are at liberty to act as they please; but certainly a wife will always find, the best politics she can study is how to merit and maintain the esteem and affection of her husband; — and this, with the management of her family, will be sufficient to take up her whole thoughts.

I hope to be forgiven for what I have said on this occasion, since I have so good an authority for it as the late ingenious Mr. Selden, who, though a great advocate for the ladies, and very much their favourite, in speaking of the duties of a wife, expresses himself in these terms:

‘ Wives, like good subjects, who to tyrants
 ‘ bow,
 ‘ To husbands, tho’ unjust, long patience
 ‘ owe;

‘ Reason

' Reason itself in them must not be
 ' bold,
 ' Nor decent custom be by wit con-
 ' trol'd;
 ' On their own heads we desperately
 ' stray,
 ' And are still happiest in the vulgar
 ' way.'

If a woman cannot bring herself to the
 same way of thinking as her husband, nor
 ought always to endeavour it, she has it
 nevertheless in her power to forbear
 thwarting his opinion; and how irksome
 soever such a restriction at first may seem
 to her, I am very well satisfied she will
 afterwards find her account in it.

A perfect concurrence of sentiment be-
 tween the persons united is, without all
 question, one of the principal ingredients
 to make marriage happy;—I am there-
 fore sorry when a too hasty entrance into
 that state hinders them from being well
 acquainted with the foibles as well as
 virtues of each other; but as it is not the
 business of these sheets to prescribe what
 steps should be taken previous to the
 sacred ceremony, but what will, ac-
 cording to all probability, render both
 parties easy under their mutual engage-
 ments, I shall close this section with a
 little

little narrative, which may serve to shew the ill effects of obstinacy.

About the middle of last May were married a certain young couple of condition, whose names it is not necessary to mention: — the courtship between them had been very short; — they had seen and liked each other, — their fortunes were pretty equal, — their friends on both sides willing, and no impediment happened to retard the consummation of their mutual wishes. The first weeks of their marriage were passed in the fashion usual on such occasions — feasting and visiting took up their days, and love engrossed their nights; — a more fair prospect of felicity could scarce present itself; but too soon, alas! the beautiful vision disappeared; black lowering clouds overspread their heaven of joy, and burst in storms, which, violent as they were, threatened to be no less lasting than their lives.

On the anniversary of that day which brought the unfortunate Chevalier St. George into the world, three gentlemen in plaid waistcoats, white roses in their button-holes, and large oak branches in their hats, stopped in a coach at their door, and were conducted in: — the lady, who is strongly attached to the present royal

royal family, had a glimpse of these sparks as they passed to her husband's dressing-room, and easily perceiving what principles they were of by their habits, were extremely disconcerted to think she was married to a man who kept such company.

But how much greater was the shock she received, when in less than a quarter of an hour she saw her husband enter the room where she was, accompanied by his three friends, and in all points accounted like them in those flagrant marks of Jacobitism above described: — after having given time to the gentlemen to make their compliments to her, (which she could scarcely return with common civility) he said to her,

‘My dear, I am going with these gentlemen to meet some others that wait for us, in order to celebrate a day which we still live in hopes of seeing a joyful one; — so you must not expect me home to dine or sup.’

He was too much in haste to go to the rendezvous to wait for any reply, and they all went down stairs, leaving her in a consternation not to be expressed.

This

This gentleman is one of those harmless Jacobites who will wear plaid and white roses, swallow bumper after bumper, swear, and talk loudly for the cause, but never contribute a single shilling for its support, much less run any risque of life or fortune.—He return'd not till very late, and had toasted too many healths to render himself in a fit condition either to sleep with his wife that night, or listen to the reproaches she might otherwise have received him with.

The next day being that which is celebrated for the anniversary of his present majesty's accession to the throne, equipping herself to make a loyal appearance at court employed her thoughts and time the whole morning:—her husband, who quitted not his bed till almost noon, on his coming down found her dressed in an orange-coloured suit of cloaths, —a bunch of yellow ribbands on her head, and another on her breast, on both which were stamp'd in silver these words:—‘ King GEORGE, and the Hanover succession for ever.’

He gazed on her for some moments with an equal share of surprize and contempt, and then cried out,—‘ Hey-day, madam,—what a figure you make to-day!

‘day!——You look all in flames,——
 ‘——orange and yellow is certainly the
 ‘most odious mixture in the world.——
 ‘Pray how came so odd a fancy into your
 ‘head?’——To this she reply’d
 haughtily,

‘Sir, it is a fancy which all good sub-
 ‘jects and true protestants must approve;
 ‘and I think you have no pretence to
 ‘find fault with my fancy;—you, who
 ‘yesterday thought yourself very fine, I
 ‘suppose, in the livery of a highland
 ‘ragamuffin, a silly flower with scarce
 ‘any smell or taste, and a bundle of
 ‘stinking leaves for a cockade!’

‘You talk impertinently, madam,’ said
 he.—‘I have just the same opinion of you,
 ‘sir,’ return’d she.—‘If you had any re-
 ‘gard for me, cry’d he somewhat angri-
 ‘ly, you would not endeavour to make
 ‘yourself so disagreeable in my eyes by
 ‘this ridiculous dress.’—‘I care not to
 ‘whomsoever it is disagreeable,’ answered
 she; ‘I wear yellow in honour of our
 ‘gracious sovereign, and orange to that
 ‘of the immortal memory of our glorious
 ‘deliverer king William, who bequeath’d
 ‘us so valuable a legacy.’

I for-

I forbear to repeat the reply he made to these words; because it is more than barely possible that some one or other, in this scrutinizing age, might take it into his head to imagine that I was glad of an opportunity of venting my own sentiments through the mouth of a third person; — it will be sufficient to inform my readers, that one reflection drew on another, till the husband and the wife seem'd equally to have forgot all the regard due to decency and good manners.

This breach, however, was afterwards patch'd up, though not so well but it soon broke out again on every little occasion, and still grew wider than before. — Each by turns endeavoured to bring the other over to their own party; but that being a thing impracticable, created such inward discontents and heart-broilings, as well as open jars, that if they do not absolutely hate, they cannot be said to love; — a peevish thwarting of each other, even in matters of the utmost indifference to either, or a sullen silence, are the least proofs of their mutual ill-humour: — in fine, the whole tenor of their behaviour affords too much reason to believe, that since they are not able to agree in one

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point,

point, they are determined never to do so in any other.



S E C T. IV.

Dress.

THE article of Dress may seem to be of very little importance to the happiness of a married state ; yet I have known some women by that alone have forfeited the esteem of their husbands, as well as rendered themselves ridiculous to their neighbours : — though the men may not understand the paraphernalia of dress, as our ingenious Laureat expresses it, yet they are capable of judging where it is well or ill adapted to the rank, circumstances, or age of the person who wears it ; and not a few there are who even go so far as to form their ideas of a woman according to the fashion of her garb ; I say the fashion of the garb, because it is not so much the richness of the stuff, as the mode and manner of making the garment, which denotes the disposition of the wearer : — a tawdry painted linnen, on the back of a fantastic woman, may be so contrived as more to attract the eyes of the spectators than a gold or silver brocade.

A young single woman who has her fortune to make, and perhaps has never as yet had an offer to that end, has something to alledge in defence of endeavouring to render herself particular and taken notice of, as by doing so she will infallibly draw a crowd of gazers about her, among the number of whom she may hope to find some one who may take a fancy to her so far as to make her his wife ; — that this method does not always fail of success, we have recent instances to prove.

A married woman has not this excuse : — she can have no motive for the pains she takes to excite popular admiration, but that one which is utterly inconsistent with her duty and her reputation, — dangerous to her virtue and the honour of her husband.

Indeed I cannot help heartily pitying the husbands of those butterfly wives who are every day flaunting in the Mall, or some other public place, equipp'd in all points as if going to dance upon a stage, and, like the ladies at Bartholomew-fair, as soon as dressed go forth to shew themselves, in order to draw company to the performance.

As this little treatise is intended entirely for the service of married women, I would not have any of them imagine, from what I have said, that I would go about to deprive them of those ornaments of dress befitting their sex and rank ; — no, — let them keep their trimmings, their embroideries, their jewels, and their trinkets ; but let all these things be worn with decency ; — I would only have every wife maintain the dignity of her character as a wife ; — not plume herself in being the authoress of new fashions, nor condescend to imitate the coquette airs of a F— M—, or any other town-mistress.

The Roman matrons, how young soever married, no sooner became wives than they distinguished themselves to be such by putting on a different sort of habit from that worn by them in their virgin state : — the Chinese, and several other Eastern nations, still preserve that custom ; and a very good custom it is, if it were only for the following reason :

A man, on seeing a beautiful woman, and ignorant that she is married, may possibly indulge desires for her, which, when afterwards informed of her condition, he may not be master enough of
himself

himself to restrain; — and whether her virtue be offended or her vanity delighted with the declaration, there is a danger of its being attended with unhappy consequences, which might have been prevented, if the first sight of her had told him she was the property of another.

As we so frequently change our modes, and by turns ape those of every nation round us, it would be well, methinks, if this more laudable one than many others were introduced; but, till that happens, I would wish every wife to endeavour both to look and act with that reserve and circumspection which is, or ought to be, the characteristic of her condition; and I am much deceived if such a behaviour, constantly pursued, would not discourage any man, who has the least regard for himself, from attempting any thing to her dishonour.

Every handsome woman, by such a conduct, might find her vanity indulged, in hearing said of herself what Mr. Waller wrote under the picture of a fine lady of his time :

- * Such Helen was, and who can blame the
 ‘ boy,
- * That in so bright a flame consum’d his
 ‘ Troy?

' But had like virtue shin'd in that fair
 ' Greek,
 ' The am'rous shepherd had not dar'd to
 ' seek,
 ' Or hop'd for pity, but with silent
 ' moan,
 ' And better fate, had perished alone.'

It will doubtless be expected that I
 should here say something in relation to
 the enormous expensiveness of dress, which
 is indeed a luxury that of late years has
 been intolerable and presumptuous; —
 scarce can you know by her habit a
 woman of the first quality from the wife
 of an artificer, so that distinction of de-
 grees of blood and fortune are almost lost:
 but if the miseries of so many families,
 undone by this one article, will not have
 influence on those who have not as yet
 fallen into the same misfortunes, the re-
 monstrances of no author will be likely
 to prevail, and the vice will become so
 general, that it is much to be feared three
 parts in four of the nation will be reduced
 to beggary in a short time, if the wisdom
 of the legislature does not take it into
 consideration to put some restriction on
 this epidemic evil.

But there yet remains something farther
 to be said on the article of Dress, before I
 take

take my leave of the subject ; — it is this : — when a woman lavishes too much time at her toylet, she will certainly lose ground in the esteem and good opinion of any man who is not a fop himself, and practises the same.

I am credibly informed that there is a certain lady in town, whenever she was to make her appearance in public, always passes five or six hours before her looking-glass, — causes her chests and cabinets to be emptied of every thing they contain, puts on first one suit of cloaths, and then another, 'till she is gone through the whole various round ; and when all this is done, must needs hold a long consultation with her woman, which of them she had best make choice of, — tho' she knows that she is all this while impatiently expected at the appointment ; — her husband waits to conduct her thither, — sends repeated messages to her dressing-room, and even comes himself to intreat she would be more expeditious ; — his natural complaisance, and perhaps some liking of her person, has hitherto kept him from reproaching her vanity and ill-manners, but will scarcely do so always ; — his temper will be tired out, and he will one day hate what he begins already to despise.

If this error is so inexcusable, as doubtless it is even in the Great, who have nothing to study but their amusements, and have so many leisure hours upon their hands, which might possibly be employ'd in a worse way, it is yet infinitely less to be forgiven in a woman in a meaner station, whose domestic affairs demand all her attention, and which must suffer intolerably, when she who is at the head of them places her chief satisfaction in embellishing and setting forth her own person to the best advantage.

All women, however, of this turn of mind are sure to be treated with the utmost indifference, if not ill-humour, by their husbands; and by their whole families, children not excepted, with disrespect.

S E C T. V.

Neatness in general.

THOUGH an over-nicety of dress be a very great fault in a wife, the contrary extreme is yet a greater, at least to herself; — to be wholly engross'd by the cares of her own person loses her the esteem of her husband; but to be too negligent of it, or, in other words, flatteringly and fluttish, subjects her to his loathing.

The advice which Æsop gives to a beautiful young lady, who had just enter'd into the state of marriage, is well worthy of observation, and ought to be engrav'd in the mind of every woman; — according to the best of my remembrance, his words are these :

‘ Take care to be always neat in your house and apparel; but nicely so in your person, above all.’

As there are few women who are not exact enough, frequently too much so in this point, before they get husbands,

whenever I see one of them degenerate afterwards to the very reverse of what she was, it puts me in mind of a story I read some time ago concerning one of the popes.

This man, who hoped to obtain the papal chair by the appearance of an extraordinary sanctity, in imitation of St. Peter, pass'd all the time he could spare from his priestly office in casting nets for fishes, selling all the freight he took, and giving the money to the poor; but having once reach'd the end of his ambition, and felt the triple crown upon his head, he hung up his net and fish'd no more;—he had now caught the prey he so long had sought for, and had nothing more to do than to sit down in ease and splendor, and enjoy the fruit of his labours.

But how terrible a disappointment must it be to a husband, who finds the fine delicate creature he had courted, no sooner made a wife than converted into a dirty dowdy;—fabled Ixion felt not a greater shock, when instead of a goddess he embraced a cloud, than he on meeting so unexpected a reverse of his high-rais'd expectations.

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But though it is certain that there are very few things which give a man a greater disgust than want of cleanliness in a wife; yet he may be apt to imagine, that the carelessness she shews of herself is an argument of her being without any desire or ambition of pleasing him; and that it is a matter of mere indifference to her, whether she retains any place in his affection or not.

This may possibly sometimes happen to be the cause, tho' I believe but very seldom; for if a woman has so little love for her husband, as not to take any pains to appear amiable in his eyes, she will at least wish to do so in those of the world, except all sensations of that pride and vanity, which in a more or less degree is inherent to the whole sex, are entirely swallowed up in one or other of these motives, viz. sloth or avarice.

Neatness is so essential an ingredient to make the map of life agreeable, that all other enjoyments, all other pleasures, summ'd up and put together, could not be able to compensate for the want of it, and would even lose their name, that being the true zest and spirit of them; — it is the parent of chearfulness, — the friend

friend of health, — equally refreshing to the mind as body, and without it all is tasteless, dull, and sickly.

Every woman, therefore, who either loves her husband, or wishes to be loved by him, should endeavour to make his home as pleasing to him as possible, which cannot be done without taking a particular care that he shall never find any thing in it but what is exactly neat and in good order ; — and as this is no more than what respect for herself, as well as for him, obliges her to do, she ought not to make any merit of it, or boast too much before him of her extraordinary notableness and housewifery.

SECT.

S E C T. VI.

Behaviour to the Husband's Kindred in particular Circumstances.

THAT a woman should behave towards her husband's kindred with great civility and respect, is a thing so generally known that no one can be ignorant of it, and for that reason needless to be mentioned here; — I should not, indeed, have given myself or my readers any trouble on this head, if there were not yet something more in it than appears to be, or is easily conceived by those who do not care to be at the pains of much reflection.

When a wife treats respectfully the family into which she is incorporated, it is certainly all they can expect, or her husband require from her; — in doing this she thinks she may sit down content; — 'tis true, she may so; — no one has reason to disapprove her conduct, as the dictates of duty and good manners are fully answered by it; but the sincere desire I have to see the marriage-state as happy as human nature will allow, makes
me

me with she would go farther yet, in order to reap some advantages to herself.

There are a thousand little circumstances, which frequently happen among relations, which, if well managed, will give her an opportunity of rendering herself of more consequence to them, and endearing to her husband, than people ordinarily imagine ;—some few of which I shall endeavour to point out, and by these others may be judged on.

As nothing is more common than for persons of the same blood to have petty quarrels, and in the heat of passion to utter the severest things against each other, yet in their hearts retain the same affection as before, I think it not enough that she forbears all attempts to widen the breach between them ;——I would not have her even to stand neuter in such a case, but be active in her endeavours to bring about a reconciliation, which, among other means, may be effected by always taking part with the absent person, and gently blaming the present as having been somewhat too rash.

If the husband himself is one of the parties concern'd in this brulée, I would have her proceed in the same manner
with

with him ; and though he should seem a little angry at her interfering in the matter, not to cease her remonstrances, but make use of every argument that love and wit can inspire her with to mitigate his resentment, and win him to forgiveness.

It is not at all improbable, but rather the contrary, that he may have secretly wished for some pretence to do what she requests of him ;—and if so, will then rejoice on finding himself furnished with one so plausible as being prevailed upon by the intercession of a beloved wife ;—how greatly therefore this will magnify his esteem for her, — how add to all the charms she before had for him, no one need be told who has ever known the pleasing emotions that rise in the heart on being urged, and as it were compelled, by the persuasions of another to pursue the dictates of his own inclination.

Neither will she, perhaps, confer a less obligation on him when she solicits in the behalf of some distress'd kinsman or kinswoman, who, either through unavoidable misfortunes, or their own faulty conduct, may be reduced to stand in need of his assistance :—the ties of blood and nature are seldom quite effaced ;—they have a strong

strong influence over minds not lost to all humanity ;——so that according to the best of my observation of married people, a wife cannot give a more convincing proof of her affection for her husband, or more endear herself to him, than by appearing zealous for the interest of all those belonging to him, with how much indifference soever he may seem to regard them.

If it should so happen, that any relation on the one side makes his addresses to one on the other, and no considerable inconvenience bars the prospect of their future happiness, she ought by all means to promote such an alliance, because the chain of love and friendship between two families becomes the stronger by being double-linked.

As there are very few people always exempt from diseases of one kind or other, whenever the husband is seized with any indisposition, whether dangerous or not, I would not have a wife leave him to the care of servants, how many soever she may have at command, or be too proud to be his chief and most constant nurse herself ;—she has the example of a great princess for so doing.

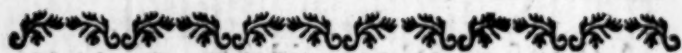
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It will also be very right in her to send for those of his kindred who are known to be most his favourites, as well as for those who are next of blood, to the end, that either in case of mortality or recovering, she may not be suspected by him or them of having had any sinister design to deprive them of such legacies as he might be inclined to bequeath, or they expect from him.

A thousand other incidents, which are impossible to be particulariz'd or enumerated, are continually happening, and tho' of less moment in themselves, may be made of equal advantage with those I have mentioned; and afford to a prudent wife fresh opportunities of ingratiating herself with the kindred of her husband, and consequently with himself.—I would therefore advise her to let none of them escape her notice, how minute and insignificant soever they may appear; for it is a truth which I have seen the confirmation of in very many instances, that the behaviour of a man when at home is greatly influenced by the insinuations he may imbibe from abroad.

I think there is no occasion to say, that she ought never to wait 'till intreated to do

do whatever good offices are known to be in her power, since to undertake a thing of this nature with grudging and reluctance would be an injury to her own character; and it is scarce possible for a woman capable of being benefited by these admonitions to stand in need of being told, that a graceful generous manner of conferring an obligation is little less grateful to the receiver than the obligation itself.



S E C T. VII.

*The Danger of living in the same House
with any Relation of the Husband's.*

HOW strenuously soever I have recommended all sorts of kindness to a husband's relations, I would by no means have a new-married woman consent to come into his house till whoever had the management of it before was removed.

Whether a mother, an old aunt, or even a sister, has had the direction of his household affairs during his single state, and continues to live with him after he is married, it will be with reluctance that she parts with the power she lately had over the family, and that reluctance may possibly create in her a spite which may
make

make her cavil at every order given by the new mistress, and frequently find faults where there are none.

Hence will arise jealousies, discontents, and secret animosities, which cannot always be restrained from breaking out in words;—what is said by either will be reported to the other,—the servants be made parties in the quarrel,—the whole family in opposition, and every thing running to confusion.

This cannot long escape the knowledge of the husband;—he will enquire into the cause of so unusual a disorder in his house;—both the ladies will then exhibit their several complaints, each will plead her own cause in terms as pathetic as she is able:—this will involve him in the most perplexing dilemma; divided between his natural affection for the one, and the solemn engagements he is under with the other, make him grow fullen and peevish, and the poor wife, tho' never so innocent, is sure to bear some share of the blame.

This is a circumstance which will be still the more unhappy, when the aggressor shall happen to be the mother of the husband;—filial duty will then tie up his tongue, and the fears of disobliging him, that

that of the wife.—What then can the latter do in such a case?—Why truly, I know of no advice that can be given for her present relief, and think the only course she has to steer is to wait with as much patience as she can 'till death, or the ill-humour of the old lady shall take her out of the way.

Oh, but methinks I hear some high-mettled woman cry out in this manner : — ‘ That wife must be a strange mean-
‘ spirited creature, who would suffer her-
‘ self to be tyrannized over by an old
‘ beldam of a mother-in-law ; — for my
‘ part, — if it were my case, I would re-
‘ turn all her taunts with interest ; — she
‘ should find I would not bear her ill
‘ usage for two days together ; — I
‘ would soon make her know that I did
‘ not marry to let her be mistress, and tell
‘ her plainly that she had no business in
‘ my house ; and if all this did not make
‘ her leave it of her own accord, would
‘ never let my husband have a moment’s
‘ peace till he turn’d her out of doors.’

Others again may be of a quite different way of thinking ; and these will tell you, — that it is the duty of a wife to pay the same obedience to her husband’s mother as to her own ; — that if the old lady
should

should be perverse and contradictory, she should never pretend to combat with her ill-humour, but rather endeavour, by a soft and submissive behaviour, to sooth her to more gentleness ;—that she should be watchful to oblige her,—observant to all her commands,—nor take upon herself the management of any thing unless she found it was her pleasure she should do so.

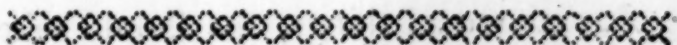
Thus variously will people speak, according to the several dispositions given them by nature, or that themselves have rendered habitual by custom : — as for me, I cannot coincide with either of these opinions ; — a termagant, or scolding woman, besides making herself ridiculed and shunn'd by all her acquaintance, will very seldom gain her point ; and when she does, will find she has paid too dear for the purchase ; — softness is the characteristic of the sex, and its greatest beauty ; when that is once thrown off and exchanged for ferocity, a woman loses all her charms, and has neither the esteem nor love of any one.

On the other hand,—as I would have a wife strictly fulfil all the duties of her place, so I would likewise have her maintain all the rights of it ; and the government

vernment of domestic affairs being solely her province, and invested in her by the laws of marriage, no one ought to condemn her for asserting her prerogative ; — the respect due from her to her husband should, indeed, induce her to listen to his mother's advice, when mildly given ; but does not oblige her to submit to it when delivered authoritatively, and by way of command ; for that would be reducing herself from the condition of mistress of the house, to which she has an undoubted title, to that of servant or dependant.

All you, therefore, who have not taken care before you entered your house to have so dangerous an impediment to happiness removed out of it ; all, I say, that you can do afterwards, is to endeavour, according to the vulgar adage, to make the best of a bad market ; — be neither too insolent nor too submissive ; — pay a decent respect to the parent of your husband, but give her no room to believe you will ever be her slave ; — avoid, as much as possible, all contests with her ; — be complying in your words, but absolute in your actions ; — be counsell'd by her in things which you think are right, and in others seem not to oppose her

her will, but pursue your own. — If you find any of the servants more ready to obey her commands than yours, instantly discharge them, but without letting the true cause of your doing so be known either to them or her ; — early convince her that you are sensible of your privilege, and determined to support it : — this, it may be, will either make her desist to attempt any exercise of a power to which she has no longer a just claim, or else to quit a place where her pride will not suffer her to appear as a second person.



S E C T. VIII.

Servants.

SERVANTS are of so much consequence to the families they live with, that the little quarrels they have among themselves are sometimes the occasion of a great deal of uneasiness to their master and lady ; for which reason I would never have a wife hearken to the complaints which may be made to her by any one of them against another ; but on the first mention of such a thing, tell them plainly that it does not become her to be an umpire of their differences, — she will suffer no disputes in her house, and that if

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they

they cannot agree and live peaceably together, both must quit her service.

To be well served, and keep a family in good order, the mistress of it should behave with sweetness and affability towards all; but be too free with none; — be liberal in rewarding merit wherever she finds it, but shew no partial favour to any one in particular; — turn away all those who, after a gentle reprimand, do not amend their faults; but do so without reproaches or loud words.

But above all things, she should take care never to trouble her husband with any repetitions of those domestic concerns which are below his notice; — never to chide a servant in his presence, or even in his hearing; or by any look or gesture let him discover she has any cause to be offended with them. — She having the management of all those who compose the household, and hires, and appoints them their several offices, and discards them as she shall judge proper, it is derogatory to her own authority to appeal to any third person, even though it be her husband, and will also fill his head with idle ideas, which, if he be a man of any sense, must needs be disagreeable to him.

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I have the pleasure of being acquainted with a clergyman of great learning, piety, and assiduity in the care of his flock, yet too modest to think he either knows or does enough to fulfil, as he ought, the high trust reposed in him; he passes all the time the public service of the church and visits to private penitents will permit, in reading and comparing the primitive fathers, and making himself as much master as possible of the true and apostolic institution.

This very worthy person has a competent estate of his own, a rich benefice, and no earthly care to discompose him, except the foible of his wife in the article I last mention'd.——In most respects she is a valuable woman; but either through the vanity of appearing an excellent œconomist, or that being perfectly exact herself in all she does, she cannot bear the least trifle amiss in another, she is continually teasing the good man with complaints against the servants.

In vain have been all his remonstrances, his entreaties;——he has removed his study from the first floor to one of the upper rooms in the house; but this affords him no relief,——still she pursues

him there, and interrupts his most serious meditations ; — almost breathless with passion, and the fatigue of coming up, she throws herself into a chair, and ushers in her discourse with these or the like exclamations : ‘ Sure never any body was
‘ plagu’d as I am ! — Servants are the
‘ devil ! — If one could do without, one
‘ would see them all hang’d before one
‘ would keep them ! — A pack of idle
‘ huffies ! — Here I have two wenches,
‘ and one only serves to make work for
‘ the other ; — neither of them are worth
‘ half the bread they eat ! — But it is all
‘ owing to you, Doctor ; — — they may
‘ break all the things in the house for any
‘ care you take, and they pay no manner of regard to me, tho’ I rave at them
‘ all day.’

Thus will she go on for an hour together ; and when at last the mighty accusation, which had brought her thither, comes to be explained, it amounts perhaps to no more than the misplacing a mop or scrubbing-brush, or the spilling half a farthing’s worth of sand.

No man would marry a woman of this disposition if he knew it before, unless for the same reason that Socrates did Xantippe, for the exercise of his patience ;
but

but we have few philosophers in these days, — few but would seek that peace abroad which they find it impossible to enjoy at home, and would think themselves justified by these words of the poet :

- ‘ What can be sweeter than our native
‘ home ?
- ‘ Thither for ease and soft repose we
‘ come.
- ‘ Home is the sacred refuge of our life,
- ‘ Secur’d from all approaches but a wife :
- ‘ If thence we fly, the cause admits no
‘ doubt.
- ‘ None but an inmate foe could drive us
‘ out :
- ‘ Clamours our privacies uneasy make ;
- ‘ Birds leave their nests disturb’d, and beasts
‘ their haunts forsake.’

For a woman to avoid giving her husband any disturbance on this account, seems to me so very easy a piece of self-denial as stands not in need of being enforced by argument, — I shall therefore add no more upon it ; but cannot wholly take my leave of the topic of Servants, without touching upon another article, which I am pretty confident has laid many an innocent wife open to the tongue of scandal.

I find there are several ladies, especially among those of the higher class, who are extremely fond of having their hair cut and dressed by a man ;——many borrow their husband's valet de chambre, some keep one of their own for that purpose, others employ a French or German artist, who shall come lolling in his own chariot, and take a guinea for what a great number of Englishwomen, bred to that business, would be glad of receiving half a crown.

There was a time, not out of the memory of many persons now living, when a virtuous woman would not, except in cases of great necessity, have suffered her head to be uncovered in the presence of any man ; much less have endured that her hair should be handled, stroked, and twisted round the fingers of a foppish foreign barber, or a pert domestic, rais'd perhaps for his dexterity this way from the degree of footman, or even groom of the stables, to that of a valet de chambre ;——but fashions alter,——and what would fifty years ago have been looked upon as highly indecent, is now polite, because the mode.

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There are still some husbands, however, who, though to avoid the imputation of being a jealous coxcomb, seem to comply with this custom, cannot in their hearts approve of it, especially if the wife's operator be a young handsome fellow, and during the performance can entertain the lady with a soft Italian air, or a merry tale of some of her acquaintance. —To my certain knowledge, many ugly suspicions, and alarming apprehensions have been occasioned merely on this score; and whether with or without foundation, have made the husband say within himself:

‘ Few know what cares a husband’s peace

‘ destroy ;

‘ His real griefs, and his dissembled joy.’

I must confess, that I still retain a very great veneration for modesty, how much soever it is of late years exploded by those of a superior taste; and as that amiable quality cannot be preserv’d without a due distance being kept between the sexes, must always be of opinion that women are fittest to attend on women in their chambers, and that no valet, clerk of the kitchen, butler, or any other male servant,

should be permitted to pass further than the door, or, on any pretence whatever, to approach the toilet or bed-side of their ladies.

A very small progress in the knowledge of human nature is sufficient to inform us, that men of all ranks are liable to the same passions and desires.—Who then can answer that a young fellow, pamper'd with ease and luxury, — probably amorous by constitution, and indulg'd in so near an access to a fine woman, may not, while he is setting her forth for conquest, become a captive himself, and feel the force of all those charms he is employed to embellish : — In a word, may he not, even in spite of himself, be enflamed with inclinations altogether inconsistent with the duties of his station, or her honour, to have inspired him with ?

Every husband who thinks at all, will doubtless think this way sometimes ; and when he does so, cannot well reconcile himself to a custom abounding with such dangerous temptations ; — for which reason, and also for some others I forbear to mention, I sincerely wish that the ladies, the married ones especially, would unite to abolish it entirely.

S E C T.

S E C T. IX.

Talkativeness and Taciturnity.

THERE are times for talking, and times to be silent ; — times when even nonsense is agreeable, and times when the most elegant discourses are insipid : — it is the humour of the hearer that gives the relish to all that is said, — as a friend of mine has happily enough expressed it :

- ‘ When the warm fluid briskly fills the
‘ veins,
- ‘ And gay emotions play about the heart,
- ‘ A jew’s-harp, or a bag-pipe will de-
‘ light :
- ‘ But when the spleen prevails, and saddening
‘ thoughts
- ‘ Clog up the native vigour of the mind,
- ‘ Then Farinelli’s self would cease to
‘ please,
- ‘ And Handel’s notes grow painful to the
‘ ear.’

Certain, indeed, it is, that the most skilful and exquisite touches of the best
D 5 musician

musician can afford no melody, when the instrument he attempts to play upon is out of tune;—every one, therefore, who would please in conversation, should endeavour to suit both his subject and manner of speaking according to the present disposition of the person to whom he speaks, and not throw water upon fire, nor fire upon mud.

Such strange vicissitudes, such fluctuating ideas run through the human mind, that it often happens the same man, seen at two different times, appears to be two different persons;—all have their gloomy and their sprightly moments, and love to be indulged in both;—a wife, therefore, who would be always pleasing to her husband, should diligently observe these changes in him, to the end she may neither by her talkativeness interrupt his pensive thoughts; nor by any unseasonable reserve strike a damp on the gaiety of his more chearful humour.

Some women are so extravagantly delighted with hearing the sound of their own voices, or the wit which they imagine is conveyed by it, that they would be perpetually talking, and can ill endure the least suspension of their vociferousness, though to be prais'd for it: — others
again,

again, of a more dull and phlegmatic constitution, will scarcely speak at all, and it is with difficulty you get a word from them; fullen, severe, and cloudy, they seem invigorated by no passion, and are little better than moving clods of earth: — the ingredients which form the composition of these latter, are in my opinion of an infinitely worse nature than those of the former, and are less adapted for society; — the one may sometimes give pain, — the other never can give pleasure: — but to do justice to the sex, very few of them are of this class, so I shall make no farther mention of them. — But to return to the alert and talkative.

But first I shall take the liberty to repeat a little passage which I met with some time ago, I think in one of the Spectators, that is exactly conformable to the subject matter of this section.

A young lady who had more wit than judgment, and more words than either, was married to a gentleman of sense and good-nature, but somewhat reserved in his disposition, loved to retire within himself, and enjoy his own meditations: — this being impossible to be done in any of the rooms his wife was accustomed to come into, he would frequently withdraw pri-

vately and hide himself in some nook or corner of the house, where she would not expect to find him;—this, for some time, answered his intent; but she at last discovered the place of his concealment, and having in vain essayed all that reproaches and entreaties could do to engage him to come forth, ask'd him wherefore he chose to be alone. — ‘I was thinking, my dear, said he.’—‘On what?’ cried she:—‘On you, my dear, reply’d he; — the happiness I enjoy in calling you mine is sufficient to engross my contemplations, nor can I bear to be interrupted in them even by yourself; — I beg, therefore, you will retire and leave me to indulge the pleasing reverie.’

The author has not thought fit to inform us whether she complied with his request or not, and we may therefore conclude that nothing material enough to be related was the consequence: — all husbands, however, would not, when intruded on in this manner, have given so genteel a rebuff; but at that time he doubtless lov’d the pretty prater, and the natural tenderness of that passion enabled him to forgive, though not to be pleas’d with her behaviour in this point.

But

But this example of forbearance, which we know not how long might continue, should not encourage a woman to depend too much on the affection with which she finds herself regarded by her husband; nor be flattered with a belief that a thing of such small importance as talking too much, if what is uttered be accompanied with pleasantry and sweetness, can deserve the name of an offence: —'tis true, it does not; —nor would any man deem it so but in those moments when his own ill-humour gets the better of his judgment, and swells the pigmy error to a gigantic height; — yet still there is a necessity this humour should be comply'd with; — like a troubled sea it gains fresh force by opposition, but if suffer'd to take its bent a-while, will by degrees subside and sink into a calm.

What then has a wife, addicted to talkativeness, to do but endeavour to conquer that propensity in herself, so far as to be able to restrain it whenever she finds it begin to grow disagreeable to the man whom it is so much her interest and happiness, as well as duty, to oblige?

SECT.

S E C T. X.

Giving and receiving Visits.

VISITING, and being visited, is now become the chief occupation of all degrees of women;—that great ladies live more in their chairs and coaches than in houses, their own especially:—the wives of middling gentry hire a hack to whirl them through the whole round of their acquaintance;—the lower sort trudge 'till they sweat to drop their howd'yes at every corner of the town;—all count upon their visits as upon their cash, are as impatient to receive them as their rents, and more punctual in paying them than their tradesmen's bills.

Women of high quality, indeed, who are under no obligation to inspect into their household affairs, as they keep people under them for that purpose, can find no other employment for their time than to pursue pleasure wherever it presents itself; and if these find something more agreeable in a rout (justly enough called so) than in the douceurs which marriage, join'd with love, is capable of affording, it is

is not to be wondered at that husband and wife are so much strangers to each other, and to home.

But how can we reconcile to common sense the same conduct in those whom fortune has placed in a lower sphere of life, — and what consequences are likely to ensue upon it? — Why truly such as are pretty obvious to the world, and might easily have been foreseen by the persons themselves.

When a husband, beginning to grow uneasy at these eternal gaddings, and the expences which they naturally involve him in, complains to his wife that his family is neglected, and his fortune impair'd by it, the general answer is, — That she must see her friends and acquaintance, and likewise return the civilities she receives from them; — that she goes no oftner abroad than other people; — that she keeps no more company than other people; — that she wears no better cloaths than other people; — that she spends no more money in entertainments than other people; — and that it is for his credit she should live in the manner she does. — This being very seldom sufficient to content him, he either retrenches her allowance, and refuses to pay those debts

debts he thinks she has no necessity for contracting; or else runs himself into worse excesses than those he condemns in her; — drinks to drive away reflection; — games in the vain hope of retrieving his circumstances, and loses all. — A gaol is probably his portion, a workhouse her's, and the children come upon the parish.

‘ But why all this clamour against
 ‘ poor visiting and being visited? — Why
 ‘ this terrible denunciation of woes attending it? — will some women be
 apt to say, and farther demand of me,
 — ‘ What harm is there in drinking a
 ‘ dish of tea with a friend or neighbour,
 ‘ and returning the same compliment to
 ‘ them when they come to see us? —
 ‘ Will that ever ruin our husbands, or
 ‘ bring destruction on ourselves and families?’ — To which I readily answer in the negative, — that it will not, provided it stops here; — nor would I have any one imagine, that because I would not have a wife a rambler, I would wish to see her a recluse; — the only danger of frequent visits consists in the following article, to which it is in every woman’s power to avoid subscribing.

By frequently going only to half a dozen places, you may, at different times,
 find

find forty or fifty other visitors ; — these will probably make invitations to you, which your complaisance will oblige you to accept ; — at each of their houses you will doubtless find fresh company, who will also make fresh invitations ; — and so on, 'till the number of your acquaintance is extended through every quarter of the town. — What then must become of your husband, your children, and your other domestic concerns ? — Can you ever be at home, or, when you are so, can you ever be alone ? — What time, what opportunity, can you have to perform any one of the offices of a good wife, a mother, or the mistress of a family ?

A free and uncereemonial enjoyment of a few chosen friends is certainly one of the greatest pleasures in life, and such as may, and ought to be indulged by the most virtuous and prudent woman, as it will exhilarate her spirits, and consequently render her more capable of going thro' all those fatigues which attend the management of a family.

A bad-conditioned man will not attempt to debar his wife of this satisfaction, and a good man will approve and rejoice with her in it ; but neither the
one

one nor the other will endure that their houses should, like the booths in Bartholomew-fair, be open to all comers. — I hope, therefore, that every wife who has unwarily been drawn into a too large acquaintance, will drop the greatest part of them as fast as possible, and select from the number those whom it will best become her character and circumstances to converse with.



S E C T. XI.

Places of public Entertainment.

AMONG all public entertainments, those of the Theatre are justly allowed to be the most innocent and improving. — I have heard many excellent men confess, that more may be learned from a good moral play, if well attended to, than from some discourses from the pulpit; and the former has this advantage of the latter, that the instruction it is capable of affording steals into the heart, and takes a deeper root by its being conveyed through the canal of pleasure.

There cannot certainly be an institution better calculated for the improvement of
all

all moral virtues, and the putting vice and folly out of countenance, than that of the stage; — nothing has a greater effect upon us than the sight of those propensities which we feel within ourselves lively represented in the actions of another; — every man, in the persons of the drama, may see the form and turn of his own mind, as he does the features of his face in a mirror, and by that reflection will be taught how to add new graces to the good qualities he is possessed of, and to rectify the bad.

Among the comedies, I am pretty sure the Careless Husband, and the Journey to London, have not been so often acted without making some proselytes both of husbands and wives; and as what I now write is intended for the use of the latter, I would recommend it to all women the least addicted to coquetry, to take this lesson from the mouth of Lavinia in the Fair Penitent, who, when her husband has been relating to her the vanity and inconstancy of some women, breaks out in this pathetic and tender exclamation:

‘ Can there be such, and have they peace
‘ of mind?

‘ My little heart is satisfy’d with you;

‘ You

- ‘ You take up all its room : — as in a cot-
‘ tage
- ‘ Which harbours some benighted princely
‘ stranger,
- ‘ Where the good man, proud of his hospi-
‘ tality,
- ‘ Gives all his homely lodging to his
‘ guest,
- ‘ And scarcely keeps a corner for himself.’

I will not pretend to be so great an advocate for the stage, as to say that all pieces exhibited there have the same tendency, or are capable of producing the same happy effects, either through the author’s want of abilities in the expression, or his not considering the true end of writing; but there are so many which have every requisite for this purpose, that none who are desirous of having their virtues heightened, or their faults corrected, need be at a loss for the means.

Though I am far from wishing to see any encouragement given to foreign performances, yet, as it is the property of music to tune and harmonize the hero’s thoughts, and it has been the mode of late years, and is every day increasing, for ladies to go as far as they can out of their own sex, and assume the robust
fierce-

fierceness of the other, I cannot but approve of their going frequently to Operas, where the softness of the Italian airs may possibly contribute somewhat towards restoring them to their more natural sweetness of manners and behaviour.

Oratorios are endowed with a yet greater and more peculiar advantage; for being on divine subjects, and always performed in Lent, what can be more perfectly adapted to elevate the soul, and inspire proper ideas for the celebration of the approaching glorious festival?

Venetian or Jubilee Balls, Ridottoes, Assemblies and Masquerades, have not these pleas for favour; and I am always sincerely concerned when I hear that any woman, who is supposed to have a just sense of honour and virtue, runs so imminent a hazard of both, as to suffer herself to be prevailed upon, either by her own curiosity or the persuasions of her more gay acquaintance, to make a party at any time in these dangerous, disorderly, miscalled pleasures.

Vauxhall and Ranelagh - gardens are accounted very innocent recreations; — walking, they say, is a wholesome exercise, and music accompanying the promenade is extremely agreeable: — this must be allowed,

allowed, — but then it is no less true, than that the pleasure of this rural magnificence is in a great measure destroyed by the vast numbers of people who crowd to be partakers of it; and that the late hours which some stay there cannot contribute much to their health or reputation.

Public breakfasting is an invention which the projectors of time-killing methods have found out to rob husbands of their wives, children of their parents, and houses of their mistresses, nay Heaven too of its due, at those very hours in which their presence is most required; — the husband would talk with his wife on some affairs of the preceding day, she cannot hear him then, she is going to breakfast at Ruckholt or Ranelagh; — the children crowd to ask a blessing of their mamma, she scarce can stay to bestow it on them, the coach waits to carry her to one of the aforesaid places; tradesmen bring their bills, she is in too much hurry to look over them; the chapel bells ring to call her to her usual devotion, she hears it not, but orders the coachman to drive away as fast as possible. — This public breakfasting is, I think, the youngest offspring of idleness and luxury, — a poor weakly brat, and I hope will never arrive at maturity; — on
this,

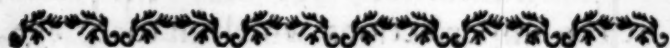
this, however, we may depend, that no wife, who has her own or family's interest at heart, will ever join in its support, either by her purse or presence.

There is yet another grotesque figure, or rather shadow of an entertainment, which by starts makes its appearance, and catches the unwary and capricious as they return from breakfasting, and engages them 'till near the hours of dining. — I doubt not but I shall be easily understood to mean those mimic scenes which are sometimes presented at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, wherein, as I have been inform'd, not only the vices, but the imperfections which nature, age, or misfortunes have inflicted on mankind, are exposed and ridicul'd in as humourous a manner as the buffoon performers are capable of doing. — Bless us! — what a strange revolution of sentiments and manners has a few years produced!

This fantastic Spirit has desisted his gambols for the present, and I should heartily wish him to fly to some other quarter, and shew his head no more in Britain, if I did not fear that some new, and if possible, more enormous folly would rise up in his stead.

I think

I think that I have now run through all the popular entertainments of this great town, and can find none, excepting Plays and Oratorios, worthy to employ much of the time and attention of a woman who aims to make her character as a wife perfect and compleat in all its branches : — even the very best among the others, which are called pleasures and diversions, should be used but sparingly, like rich cordials, which, taken too frequently, and in large quantities, depress the spirits they were intended to exhilarate.



S E C T. XII.

Economy, and the Means by which that Virtue may be rendered doubly pleasing to a Husband.

OEconomy is no more than frugality refin'd ; — the one teaches us to regulate our expences according to our circumstances, — the other, to employ the very same expences so judiciously as to make them appear rather greater than they are ; — the one is apt to carry with it an air of parsimony, the other that of liberality ;

berality ; and I know no one quality more useful in a wife, nor which brings greater credit to her husband.

There are some women who, in those things which appertain to their province, will make a better shew of five pounds, than others, though perhaps of a more sparing nature, are able to do with twice that sum. — Certain it is, that many people waste money by endeavouring to preserve it : — a good œconomist presently distinguishes what is proper to be done, and does it chearfully at once ; but the barely frugal waits 'till necessity enforces ; so seems always in a scarcity, and can neither bestow comfort at home, nor acquire reputation abroad.

In fine, œconomy is the best science a woman can study ; — the greatest ought not to be above it, nor the meanest diverted from it by any other application whatever, as it is indeed the crown of all, and without which nothing can rightly prosper : — but this is so known a truth that I need waste no time in expatiating upon it, and shall therefore only give those of my fair readers, who are married, a hint by which they may doubly endear themselves to their husbands, if of a generous way of thinking, by an act
E which

which the practice of this virtue will put in their power.

And this I think I cannot better do than by presenting them with two pretty recent instances of the behaviour I would recommend, which, though to some wives it may appear a work of supererogation, may encourage others to perform it, more than all the rhetoric that any one could employ for that purpose ; — so just, as well as elegant, are the words of the incomparable Sir Charles Sedley on this occasion :

‘ Example is a living law, whose sway
 ‘ We more than all the written laws obey.’

A lady who is mistress of many valuable accomplishments, particularly this of œconomy, is the wife of a captain of horse : — it happened in about a year after their marriage, that the regiment to which he belongs was to be reviewed ; — the duke, several general officers, and many persons of quality and distinction were expected to be present, — and the captain was more than ordinarily careful that every thing about him that day should be as complete as possible.

The

The wife had observed all these preparations, without seeming to take any notice of them 'till the morning of the day arrived, when calling for her husband's valet de chambre, she bid him bring privately to her the hat which his master intended to wear; which he immediately doing, she fixed on the middle of the cockade a jewel of this invention; — it was a pretty large diamond, with a ring or compartment round it, enamell'd, with these words, — LOVE AND LOYALTY; and on the top a sprig of smaller pendant diamonds, which on the least motion of the head waved in the air: — having placed this to her mind, she put the hat again into the box, and strictly charged the valet to say nothing to the captain of what she had done 'till he should call for it.

On sight of the jewel the captain cry'd out in some surprize, — ‘ Heyday! ‘ what's here!’ — The man then telling him what his lady had done, he examined it more closely, — was charm'd with it, and ran hastily to his wife's chamber, — ‘ My dear,’ said he, as he entered, ‘ how came this upon my hat?’ — ‘ I ‘ put it there,’ answered she smiling. — ‘ And pray how came you by it,’ de-

E 2

manded

manded he.—‘I bespoke it of a jeweller,’ returned she, ‘and have, paid for it; so you may wear it without any apprehensions.’

He then doubted not but she had made him a present of it, as she had brought him a good fortune, the income of which was settled upon herself, and began to make her some very tender acknowledgments for this proof of her affection; but she presently interrupted him, saying, ‘I will receive no thanks for what I do not deserve; — I purchased this toy, ’tis true, but paid for it with your money.’ — ‘With mine?’ cried he, not able to comprehend what she meant, as he knew not that she had any cash of his in her hands.—‘Yes,’ replied she, ‘I have saved something every week out of your allowance for house-keeping, and thought the little sum I had hoarded up could not be better disposed of than in this addition to your cockade.’

The captain, who had never seen the least scantiness at his table, was so much astonish’d at what he heard, that for some moments he could utter no more than,— ‘Can it be possible? — Good God! — can it be possible?’ — ‘It is very true I assure you,’ resumed she, ‘as I can make
‘ appear

‘ appear by my accounts ; for I constantly
 ‘ set down whatever I expend, even to
 ‘ the most minute article : — but I hope,
 ‘ my dear,’ continued she, ‘ you are not
 ‘ displeased either with the fancy or de-
 ‘ sign in what I have done.’

‘ Displeased !’ cry’d he, ‘ both are like
 ‘ yourself, — surprisngly charming ! —
 ‘ ravishing !’ — These words were ac-
 companied with a thousand kisses, which
 perhaps would have been succeeded by a
 thousand more, but the hour approached
 in which his duty called him to the field,
 and he was obliged to leave her, though
 with a heart full of the tenderest admira-
 tion of her love and virtue.

The captain found himself greatly dis-
 tinguished by his fine cockade, which
 pleased him so much, that supping with
 several of the officers that night, he could
 not forbear relating the whole history of
 it. — Every one was amazed and charmed ;
 the lady’s health was toasted in full
 bumpers ; — the bachelors among them
 swore that they would not be unmarried
 two days, if they were sure to get such
 wives ; and those who were already mar-
 ried, tho’ they congratulated their friend’s
 happiness, could not keep themselves from
 testifying an envy of it, which perhaps

their own wives might severely feel the effects of on their coming home.

Whatever some people may think, I cannot help being of opinion, that this lady could not have bestowed the money she had acquired by her good management better than in purchasing the lasting esteem of her husband, and the high admiration of all his friends. — Economy is, indeed, so noble a qualification in a wife, that she who is able to save any thing out of a moderate allowance deserves great praise, even though she should lay it out in some such pretty toy to ornament her own person, ~~and pretend it was the pretence of a friend~~ : — but then the doing this would be injuring another virtue, of which I shall hereafter speak, when I have given the second instance I promised of rendering œconomy doubly engaging to a husband.

There is a certain tradesman in the city, who, without being the most opulent among his neighbours, is perhaps one of the most happy ; — the moderate profits of his business enable him to live comfortably, though not profusely ; — he has always a good fire, a clean hearth, a table well furnished with every thing necessary, and a smiling wife, who never
fails

fails to receive whoever sit down to it with a chearful welcome.—This worthy honest man happened some time since to have dealings with a person of a quite different disposition; a hungry hound, who thought nothing safe that was not in the gripe of his own clutches;—a wretch who would sacrifice the reputation of his best friend to his own sordid avarice, and knew no joy on earth but that of hoarding money.

On making up some accounts between these two, the balance on the side of the miser was upwards of threescore pounds, which he insisted should be paid directly:—the tradesman told him, that having exported a considerable quantity of goods abroad, he could not, with any convenience, answer his demand 'till the returns should arrive, which, by a letter of advice he had received, he expected would be in a very few days.—This was so far from satisfying the other, that his countenance immediately changed, and he reply'd in a surly tone, — 'Mr. ***', I am under no 'obligation to wait the uncertain return 'of ships from foreign parts, which may 'or may not come at the time you mention, just as the wind happens to prove: '—— if you cannot pay such a sum as 'this upon demand, I shall think your 'circumstances very bad, and take mea-

‘fures accordingly ; for you may depend upon it that I will not be kept out of my money two days ; — so if you cannot raise it in that time, you must take what follows.’—In speaking these words he went hastily away, as if resolved to give no ear to any farther excuses.

The tradesman’s wife coming soon after into the compting-house on some occasion, and finding by her husband’s looks that he was greatly disconcerted, asked him, with some emotion, if any thing extraordinary had happened ; on which he told her the whole story, adding, that he had been ten years in business without ever being treated in the like manner. — ‘ Such things are not to be wondered at,’ said she, ‘ in times like these ; — but is this all that troubles you ?’ — ‘ All !’ cried he, somewhat surprized at her indifference, ‘ I have not much above a quarter of the sum requir’d of me in the house. — I believe, indeed, that I might borrow it ; but an obligation of that kind is never paid, and I am equally loth to press upon those who are indebted to me before their usual time of payment ; — yet something must be done, — my credit is at stake.’

‘ You

‘ You shall need do neither of the
‘ things you speak of,’ answered she; ‘ I
‘ can supply you with somewhat more
‘ than the sum you want.’ — ‘ You !’
cried he, staring her full in the face, —
‘ Prithee, my dear, do not tantalize me.’
‘ — Sure you cannot think me so stupid,’
resumed she, ‘ as to turn an affair of
‘ this consequence into raillery ; — no,
‘ — I will presently convince you how
‘ much I am in earnest.’ — She had no
sooner said this than she ran up stairs,
and immediately returned, bringing in her
hand a small canvas bag, and emptied it
on his desk ; — he was greatly astonished,
but counted over the pieces she had pour’d
out, and found they amounted to ninety-
three pounds. — ‘ This is, indeed, more
‘ than I want,’ said he ; ‘ but pray tell
‘ me by what means you became mistress
‘ of this money.’

‘ You know, my dear,’ replied she,
‘ that I have often asked you if you were
‘ satisfied with your table, and you have
‘ always answered, that you were perfect-
‘ ly so ; and that it was better supplied
‘ than you could have expected for the
‘ money you allowed for that purpose ;
‘ — yet have I been able to save out of
‘ it, in five years, which is the time we
E 5 ‘ have

‘ have been married, the sum I now present you with. — Indeed, I intended to lay it up ’till I could add as much to it as would purchase the little house at Hackney, which I have heard you so frequently wish yourself the master of, in order to retire to it at leisure seasons ; — but since this exigence has fallen out, I should have testified little regard either for your peace of mind, or credit in the world, to have concealed it longer.’

He was ready to fall down and worship her, not only for so unexpected a relief, but also for the means by which she had been enabled to afford it to him.—He sent that instant for his rapacious creditor, and paid him ; and has since made no scruple of relating the whole transaction to his friends, who think they can never enough praise the œconomy and generosity of his fair deliverer.

But because some people may be apt to think that both these husbands were lavish in their allowance for house-keeping, I should be guilty of great injustice to their amiable wives, if I put an end to this section without assuring the reader, that neither of them received more than what was judged, by all who heard it, barely necessary for that use.

I know

I know very well, that some wives may think they have reason to object against this part of my advice; and say, — that if they were to act in the same manner with these two ladies, their husbands would afterwards be apt to retrench their allowance. — A man who would do this must be strangely ungenerous; yet I cannot answer but that there are men who have souls narrow enough to be capable of such a meanness: — yet if this should prove to be the case, a wife will nevertheless have a satisfaction within herself in a consciousness of having deserved better treatment, as a late excellent poet very truly says:

‘Virtue’s its own ineffable reward.’

Therefore, besides this, I shall take the liberty, in the course of these admonitions, of recommending several other things, which, though they may go beyond what is called strict duty, I am very certain a wife will always find her account, some way or other, in the performance of.

All the danger I can foresee in this is, — that a wife, after discovering so much ingratitude and poorness of spirit in her husband, will scarce be able to regard

him either with that esteem or tenderness she did before; — nor, indeed, is it at all reasonable to expect she should.—I would have her, notwithstanding, persevere in the same good management as ever, and let him find no change in the care of his domestic affairs, whatever he may do in her affection to his person.

But I shall enforce the argument no farther, and conclude in the words of an old, but very eminent author.

- ‘ True prudence, like the never-changing
‘ sun,
- ‘ Will always its own steady course of mo-
‘ tion run.’



S E C T. XIII.

*The great Advantages of Sincerity both to
ourselves and others.*

— SINCERITY and Truth are only synonymous terms, and, if rightly consider'd, will be found to signify one and the same thing : — it is impossible to practise the one, and be guilty of a breach of the other; and whoever deals unsincerely, deals untruly; for there are
lying

lying looks and lying actions, as well as lying-tongues ; and every kind of deception is in fact a different mode of lying.

This excellent quality may indeed be called the queen of virtues, as it gives dignity to all the others ; — love, friendship, and even devotion, without it are but empty names ; — where that is wanting, nothing is real merit, or can be acceptable either to God or man.

If to find ourselves deceived by a bosom friend, or a long-favoured servant, inflicts great inquietude on the mind, how much more difficult is it to bear with patience the same discovery in a wife ! — We may break off all acquaintance with a pretended friend, — banish a faithless servant from our presence ; but from an insincere wife death only can relieve us.

Besides, a man looking upon his wife as a kind of supplemental self, will the least easily be brought to pardon any deception from that quarter ; and if he does, will be always jealous, always suspicious of her every word and action : in fine, all future confidence in her will be destroyed, and then no harmony can be expected.

I am

I am very sensible that there is many a wife, even among the number of those who justly are accounted good, who thinks herself not obliged, nor that it is expedient for her, to trouble her husband with every little step she takes; and believes that she fully discharges her duty in doing nothing that is any way inconsistent with his honour or his interest. — This cannot be denied; but then there are some men of so inquisitive a nature, and withal so tenacious of their dominion over the mind as well as person of their wives, that the most trifling circumstance, by chance betray'd, and which they were ignorant of before, is sufficient to fire them with resentment, and raise in them the most alarming apprehensions.

‘This woman has deceived me,’ — will a husband of this class say within himself; — ‘’tis in an affair of no moment, indeed; — but what then? — She that is capable of imposing on my credulity in things of small consequence may also do the same in those of greater, if interest or inclination tempts. — What dependance can I now place on her? — What assurance can I have that my honour is safe in her keeping?’
Thus

Thus by reflecting too scrutinously that there is a possibility of being wrong'd by his wife, his imagination may be work'd up to such a pitch as to make him believe he is really so,—and then every word she speaks will be misconstrued; —her very gestures suspected: — if cool in her behaviour towards him, he takes it for unkindness, — if tender, for deceit; — he will employ spies to watch all her motions, and tho' he finds nothing to condemn, will yet be doubtful, fullen, discontented, and cry out in the words of Mr. Dryden,

- ' Ah! why are not the hearts of women
- ' shown!
- ' False women to new joys unseen can
- ' move;
- ' There are no prints left in the paths of
- ' love:
- ' All other goods by public marks are
- ' known,
- ' But this we most desire to keep has
- ' none!

I do not say that this will always be the case, and Heaven forbid it should; yet as it may, and has sometimes happen'd, it is best to avoid the most remote danger of so terrible a misfortune, which can only be
done

done by acting, even in the most trivial matters, without reserve or disguise.

If those excellent wives, made such honourable mention of in the preceding section, had employ'd that money their good management had hoarded up, to the relief of distressed persons, or any other laudable or useful purpose, without acquainting their husbands with any thing of the matter, they certainly would have been justified by the world, as well as by their own conscience.

But tho' the captain and the tradesman are both of them men of a benevolent and generous way of thinking, and would doubtless have approved such an action if told of it by themselves, yet I very much question whether it would not have been consider'd by them in a quite different light, if afterwards informed by some other person that such a thing had been done without their privacy and consent: — indeed I much fear that the ladies, instead of raising themselves in the love and esteem of their husbands, would have forfeited some part of what they before possessed.

I am well aware, that by the greatest part of my female readers I shall be thought to have carried this point too far ;

far ; and that if sincerity exacted those exalted punctilios I have been describing, there would be no such thing as the practice of this virtue in the world ; — they may also farther add, that no husband has a right to expect from his wife those proofs of complaisance which she never receives from him.

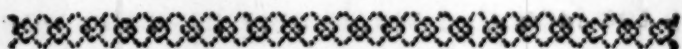
To the first of these cavils I answer, — that a woman of equal delicacy as prudence, will find no difficulty in complying with these admonitions ; — and as to the second, I would only have the women remember, that it is not the intent of these pages to make a perfect husband, but a perfect wife.

END of the FIRST BOOK.

T H E



T H E
W I F E.
B O O K II.



S E C T. I.

On Detraction.



Am always sorry when I hear the fairest part of the creation almost universally accus'd of being guilty of one of the foulest faults, — I mean that of detraction; — a fiend begot by envy, nurtur'd up by ill-nature, and pamper'd by self-love and vanity.

What can be more mean than to steal from the merit of others in order to render our own more conspicuous? — What more cruel than to depreciate perfections, which, whether bestowed by nature, or
acquir'd

acquir'd by education, have a title to respect and love? — What more unjust and base than to give the lye to our own consciences, and seem to condemn what we cannot but inwardly approve? — yet this is the true picture of detraction, which, like a basilisk, poisons all it looks upon.

Methinks it would be better policy, as well as greater virtue in a woman, to endeavour to imitate those accomplishments she sees admir'd, than to attempt to diminish the value of them; — real loveliness will be still the same; — words will never obscure its lustre, and are far from having any effect on a man of understanding; or if they have, it will be such a one as is far from the maligner's intention; — that is, he will rather be more curious to pry into the truth, and thereby perhaps discover charms in the injur'd object, which otherwise might have escaped his notice.

Many a young damsel has lost her sweetheart by taking this method to secure him; and what is of much more melancholy importance, many a wife has forfeited the good opinion of her husband by aiming to enhance it at the expence of others.

How

How often, to the great disgrace of the sex, have I heard men say, that they would never depend on the character of one woman given by another; and I have been credibly informed, that it was to an incident of the nature I am speaking of, that the world is indebted for Mr. Pope's fine Poem, entitled, the Rape of the Lock.—The story is this:

A lady of distinguished charms, it seems, was, on account of the admiration she receiv'd, so much expos'd to the envy of some of her female acquaintance, that they reported she wore false hair; on which a certain baron, resolved to be convinced of the truth, and to confute the aspersion if he found it to be one, had the temerity to cut a lock of her hair in the manner describ'd by the above-nam'd excellent poet.

The mention of this brings to my remembrance a passage which happened some time ago in a family with whom I was well acquainted, and is much more applicable to my present purpose, as I would wish all married women to take warning by it.

A cer-

A certain gentleman, whose real name I shall conceal under that of Dorantes, was married to a young lady of equal birth and fortune, and who, without being a celebrated beauty, was perfectly agreeable in her person : — he behaved with great tenderness towards her, — she was passionately fond of him ; — no couple could live more happily together, 'till an unlucky propensity, to which women are too prone, dissolv'd the cement of their union, and made both as wretched as before they had been blest.

The wife of Dorantes was extremely intimate with a young widow, to whom I shall give the name of Clara ; — they were acquainted in their childhood, and the change of their conditions afterwards had made no alteration in the sentiments of either : — seldom two days pass'd over without their seeing each other ; and as Dorantes staid pretty much at home, he was very glad of a third person to make up a party for Ombre.

Clara was very handsome, — had a regular set of features, — fine hair, — fine teeth, — and, above all, a remarkable delicate complexion : — Dorantes had several times occasionally mentioned
those

those perfections in her to his wife ; which, tho' as will appear by the sequel, not a little displeased her, she seemed to take no notice of 'till one day, as they were talking together on the beauty of some ladies of their acquaintance, he said, — ' Well, ' I see none that are half so agreeable as ' your friend Clara.' — ' Clara looks ' very well altogether,' replied she gravely ; ' but it costs her a great deal ' of pains to do so.' — ' What pains ?' cried he. — ' Why to tell you the truth,' resum'd she, ' all those things you admire in her are nothing but mere art ; ' — she has seven or eight false teeth to ' my knowledge ; — then as to her hair, ' it is naturally inclined to red ; but she ' dies it with a certain water sold at a ' shop in Buckler's-Bury, which turns it ' to that fine black it now appears ; and ' as to her complexion, she uses both ' white and red ; besides, she always sleeps ' in a night mask to keep away pimples.' — ' Impossible ! my dear,' resum'd he ; ' I have eyes as well as you, and can ' easily distinguish between what is natural ' and what is artificial.'

' You men are often deceiv'd in these ' things,' answered she ; ' if you were ' to see her in a morning you would ' be convinced of the truth of what I tell ' you,

‘you, — and a great deal more; — but
‘I love Clara, and would not for the
‘world say what I have done to any one
‘except yourself.’ — ‘You are in the
‘right,’ said he with some ill-humour;
‘for nobody would believe you if you
‘did.’

‘I am sorry then I ever mentioned it
‘to you,’ said she a little haughtily. —
‘It might have been better you had not,’
reply’d he sternly, — ‘because it gives
‘me no very favourable idea either of
‘your generosity or your sincerity; and
‘but confirms what I have often heard say
‘of your sex, — that no one woman
‘ever spoke well of the beauty of an-
‘other.’ — With these words he snatch’d
up his hat, and went directly out of the
house.

The wife, who had never before been
spoke to in this sharp manner by her
husband, now doubtless repented of what
she had said; but the words were gone
out of her mouth, — she could not call
them back, and pride and shame would
not suffer her to confess she had been
guilty of uttering a falsity: — from this
time forward she perceived a visible decay
in that tenderness and respect with which
she had been treated by Dorantes, and
began

began to hate the innocent Clara for a misfortune which she had entirely brought upon herself; — she behaved to her with great coolness, and at length ordered the servant to say she was not at home whenever she came. — The fair widow on this totally refrain'd her visits; and as she knew she had done nothing to deserve the usage she received, thought it beneath her to enquire into the cause.

From what small beginnings do sometimes the greatest feuds and discontents arise! — Dorantes, finding that Clara did not come to their house as usual, doubted not but that his wife had either personally affronted her, or spoke of her to others in the same manner she had done to him; and reflecting, perhaps, a little too deeply on the injustice of the thing, could not keep himself from entertaining a secret contempt, mixed with indignation, upon the author.

Chance contributed to heighten in him this ill humour towards his wife; — he met Clara one day by accident, and accosting her with his accustomed politeness, asked the reason why his wife had been so long deprived of her agreeable conversation. — To which she very gravely reply'd, — that she had made several visits,

visits, none of which being returned, she could not flatter herself that her company was any longer acceptable. — ‘Oh, madam, said he, I beg you will not so far wrong your own merits, or our just sense of them, as to harbour such a thought: — I am extremely sorry for my wife’s remissness; but I suppose she depended on the familiarity between you for an excuse; — therefore I hope you will have good-nature enough to forgive it, and convince us that you do so by letting us see you soon.’ — ‘Sir, answered she, when your lady thinks fit to let me know when she will be at home, I shall do myself the favour to wait on her.’ — She concluded these words with a curtsy of leave-taking, and turned so hastily away that he had not an opportunity of adding any thing further.

On his return home he repeated what had passed between them to his wife; and added, that as he found there was no pretence for breaking off acquaintance with that lady, he would have her make an invitation for her to come. — Her face grew red as scarlet on the first mention of Clara’s name, and when he had given over speaking, — ‘I do not understand what she means, said she, by
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‘giving herself these airs;——I never
‘forbid her my house, and if she thinks
‘fit to stay away, I have no reason to in-
‘treat her presence; — yet, since I find
‘it will so much oblige you, will send to
‘her.’ — ‘Oblige me!’ cried he in an
angry tone. — ‘Yes, — since you in-
‘terest yourself so far in the affair,’ re-
plied she. — This put him beyond all
patience; — he told her that she behaved
very ill, —— that she discovered a mean
and base disposition,—and that if she per-
sisted in it, she would render herself un-
worthy either of love or respect.

‘I see, cried she, that I have forfeited
‘both with you; but it is not to my dis-
‘position, but to Clara’s more prevailing
‘charms, I am indebted for so great a
‘misfortune.——Ungrateful and incon-
‘stant man, is this the return for all the
‘tender affection I have felt for you!’

Men can ill bear reproaches, especially
when innocent of the cause, as Dorantes
really was; — he replied in the most bit-
ter terms; which she being unable either
to endure or to retort, half suffocated
her with rage; — she flew into the garden,
and throwing herself upon a green bank
at the further end, there gave a loose to
tears and complainings.

One

One of the maids happening to be at a window saw where she lay, and had the discretion to run hastily down and remind her, that some rain having lately fallen, the dampness of the earth might endanger her health: — it seems, indeed, that the poor lady was as cold as marble, tho' the inward agitations she was in hinder'd her from feeling any exterior inconvenience; — she rose, however, and went into her chamber, but fell into such violent shudderings as obliged her to suffer herself to be put to bed, where she continued very ill the whole night.

Dorantes came not home 'till very late, and being told his wife was indisposed, slept in another chamber; — but on hearing in the morning she was much worse, and had need of advice, sent immediately for a physician, who he knew had always attended her family.

This gentleman found her in an high fever, and a little delirious; — all that could be done for her was done, but in vain; — her distemper every hour increased, and in two days her life was despaired of; — but on the third she grew, according to all appearance, better; — the violence of the fever was abated, and her

senses perfectly restored.—Alas! the cruel disease had only left the outward frame to prey with greater force upon the nobler parts;—death had now seiz'd her heart, she was sensible of it herself, and asked if Dorantes was at home; and being told he was, and but lately left her chamber, desired he would come in again, which he presently did.

He had no sooner seated himself on her bedside than she made a sign to those who were in the room to withdraw, and then taking hold of one of his hands, said to him, — ‘My dear Dorantes, I feel I am no longer for this world, but cannot leave it without confessing that I have been guilty of the greatest injustice to Clara; yet was it not malice that made me so;—I endeavoured to make her odious in your eyes, only because I feared she had appeared too amiable:—it was a fault indeed, but it was a fault of love;—as such forgive it.’ — ‘It was a weakness,’ answered he, which I was sorry to observe in you; for upon my honour, I never had a thought of Clara, or any other woman, in prejudice of that affection I have vowed to you.’ — ‘How kind is this assurance!’ cry’d she; it gives me pleasure even in death.’ — ‘Talk not of death!’ interrupted

“rupted he, tenderly embracing her;—
“live, oh live, and be as happy as a husband’s love can make you!”——“ ’Tis too late,” said she; and that instant fell into strong convulsions, which, though her youth and strength of constitution struggled with for some time, she never recovered from..

Dorantes was greatly troubled; but it would be needless to repeat the particulars of his behaviour on this sad event, as it is inserted only to shew the ladies, that to traduce any woman to the man who has an esteem for her, serves rather to increase than diminish the good opinion he before had of his wife.

S E C T. II.

Advice and Persuasion.

WHEN the two sexes join in the sacred bands of marriage, the woman, from the instant she is made a wife, becomes co-proprietor with her husband in his fortune; — nothing can happen to that without affecting her; — she has a right to share in all the good, and must bear her part in all the ill, therefore has an undoubted claim to be made acquainted with all the accidents that shall from time to time befall it, and also to give her opinion in relation to the management and disposal of it.

This privilege, however, should always be taken with the utmost caution and discretion, and never exerted, or too strenuously enforced, even in cases of the most important and extraordinary nature; — for I have been often sorry to observe, that advice offered by a wife, tho' ever so equitable and expedient, very rarely meets with the desired success, when it did not come disguised under the softer and

and more humble appearance of persuasion.

Men, generally speaking, are so vain of their boasted learning, and withal so jealous of that power which law and custom invest them with in marriage; that when a husband perceives his wife begins to interfere in any thing beyond her domestic affairs, he presently concludes she is attempting to infringe on his prerogative, and for that reason, if it can deserve the name of one, rejects and treats with contempt whatever she offers by way of advice.

Nay, I have known some husbands, who have been so foolishly tenacious and obstinate in this point, as to act even in direct contradiction of their own sense of things, when their wives have unfortunately happened to drop the first hint of what was proper to be done: — to a man of this temper in vain the best of women might plead in the words of Mr. Dryden :

- ‘ Take sound advice, proceeding from a
‘ heart
- ‘ Sincerely your’s, and free from fraudulent
‘ art.’

Such a man, as too many such there are, may possibly be won by the intreaties of his wife, but will never confess himself convinced by any arguments she can urge:— but as this disposition does not always shew itself, the surest way for a woman to prevail on him to do what she finds is for their common interest to be done, is not to insist on the rectitude of the thing, nor to seem to be too desirous of correcting his judgment, but of informing her own, by asking if he did not think it best to proceed in such or such a manner; and then, if he approves of what she says, tho' perhaps it came not into his mind before, he may probably reply,——‘ Yes, yes,—I always intended ‘it should be so.’

The less share of real understanding a man is possess'd of, the more lordly and self-sufficient will he for the most part be found:— whatever he says or does is absolute;— he scarce ever begins or ends a sentence without an —— ‘ I pronounce it!’— or,——‘ I have said it!’— And in his actions answers exactly to the character given by the humorous poet in his excellent poem of *Hudibras* :

- So sullenly addicted still
- To's only principle, his will,
- That whatsoever it chanc'd to prove,
- No force of argument could move.'

All husbands, 'tis true, are not of this arbitrary and unreasonable way of thinking; but it is no less true that there are few, very few among them, who do not chuse to act every thing of themselves; and tho' they may be wise enough to follow the advice given them by their wives, when they find it better than their own, yet still they would be much more pleased to have stood in no need of it.

The men also are too apt to heighten and corroborate this idle notion in each other; — a husband is no sooner known to have followed the counsel of his wife, than his companions cry out, that he is under petticoat-government. — with a thousand other such like sarcasms, and so turn, perhaps, the most prudent action of his whole life into farce and ridicule.

It therefore behoves every woman, who is desirous of preserving herself in the good graces of her husband, to be very careful how she reports among her friends and acquaintance any ascendancy she has

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gain'd

gain'd over him, as there is great danger that what she then mentions may be the last she will ever have to boast of, if the words which fall from her on that score should by any accident happen to reach his ears.

Among numberless proofs I have been witness of in relation to this humour in married men, which I am now admonishing all wives to guard against, there was one, which, as I can never reflect upon without smiling, may probably have the like effect on my readers.—It was this :

I dined one day at the house of a gentleman and lady, with whom I had been long acquainted ;—the conversation turning on the public funds, one of the company (for I was not the only guest) congratulated my friend on having been so fortunate as to dispose of a large property he had in the India-house, at a time when stocks were at a higher price than they had been for some years before, and perhaps might ever be again. — ‘ Ay, sir,’ cried the lady, with some eagerness, — ‘ it was a very lucky thing, indeed ;— ‘ and I am heartily glad that I advised ‘ my husband to it.’

Never

Never in my life had I seen a countenance so suddenly, and so strangely altered as was that of my friend, on hearing his wife speak in this manner :— ‘ You advised me ! cried he, I thought of the thing myself, and was resolved to do as I did before you ever made the least mention of it.’

The look that accompanied these words, and the tone in which they were spoke, a little disconcerted the good lady ; but she recover’d herself in an instant, and with an admirable presence of mind, replied, — ‘ Well then, my dear, you fulfilled the proverb, that good wits jump ; — and I have the honour, at least, of being of the same opinion with you.’

No more was said on the occasion, but I easily perceived in the faces of every one present, how much they were pleased with the lady’s answer ; — her husband, however, could not entirely bring himself back to his former gaiety and good-humour during the whole time we staid, tho’ I believe he endeavour’d to do it all he could.

It is certain that this lady spoke as she did thro’ mere inadvertency, and on finding

ing what she said was displeasing, had the address to turn it off with an air of pleasantry, which left her husband no excuse for persevering in his ill humour; —but how blameable soever this caprice of nature, for it can be called no other, may be in a man when carried to too great a height, it is doubtless much better, for the sake of peace, that the wife should rather comply with than oppose it; especially as it is a thing which she may do with so much ease.

But when a woman runs from house to house, as I have known some do, bragging of what power she has over her husband; and that she has made him do such or such a thing, it infallibly exposes both the one and the other to the ridicule and laughter of the world.

I believe I have said enough on the article of advice, to convince any prudent woman in what manner it will best become her to behave; yet I cannot put an end to the section without adding one example, which the last age furnished us with, and which I heartily wish to see many imitators of in the present.

It was the fate of a very deserving young lady to be married to a man who,
tho³

tho' of high and distinguished birth, had such a miserable want of understanding as to render him incapable of transacting any business whatsoever : — the match had been made by friends, — little courtship had pass'd between the young couple, and she knew not that she was going to be tack'd to a fool for life, 'till after the indissoluble knot was tied ; — the thing was now without a remedy, therefore, instead of making any complaints of her husband's defects, she set about considering by what means this misfortune might be made as supportable as possible, his reputation saved, and consequently her own.

It happened luckily, that tho' he was a fool, he was not of that obstinate sort some are ; — he had been always under the tutelage of his lady mother, so could more easily submit to that of a wife ; — she soon discovered this pliant disposition in him, and took the hint : — she wrote all his letters for him, whether on business or complaisance, which he copied after her, and made pass for his own. — When any person came to him upon affairs of importance, she always pretended he was either abroad or indisposed, but said that she would communicate to him the purport of their coming, and let them know his pleasure concerning

ing it the next day; which she never failed to do, either by making him write an answer, or sending by a servant the message which she put into his mouth.

Thus did she do every thing without seeming to do any thing; and so inviolable a secrecy did she preserve in this method of proceeding, that when any of her own nearest relations, or most intimate friends, suspecting the weakness of her husband's intellects, would say to her that they supposed he put the sole direction of his affairs entirely into her hands, she always replied in the negative, and told them she was surprised they should imagine it; and added, that tho' he was not very fluent in discourse, nor had the most graceful manner of delivering his sentiments, yet he was a person of good sense, and ignorant of nothing that might be expected from him.

But it was not in the power of this excellent wife, however, to deck her husband with those honours which her good management was every day gathering for him, — his insufficiency would sometimes peep out in spite of all her care to conceal it; nor could she avoid receiving those praises which she would never confess she had any pretence to merit.

SECT.

S E C T. III.

*Rambles to Bath, Tunbridge, Scarborough
Spaw, and other Places of public Re-
sort.*

GREAT cause have the inhabitants of this happy island to bless the munificent Creator for the many salubrious springs with which it abounds ; — scarce is there any malady, — any disease, whether external or internal, — any pain so acute or habitual, that the medicinal waters have not the power greatly to abate, if not entirely cure ; they are the dernier resource of the physicians, and prescribed when drugs have long been tried and found of no effect.

But, alas ! what numbers are depriv'd of partaking those benefits which nature has so plenteously bestowed ! — How many weak and sickly wretches are wantonly thrust away from the pool of life by the robust and healthy ? — A medicinal spring is no sooner discovered than a new scene of luxury is opened ; — a magnificent room is built for the convenience of music, dancing, gaming ; — a large

large subscription is made for its support; — the rich, the gay, the great, immediately crowd thither in shoals; not to drink the waters, but to share in the diversions of the place; — some less innocent, perhaps, to drop a child, or to meet a favourite gallant, whose company they could not so easily enjoy in town; — by their presence the price of lodgings, and every necessary of life, is raised to an exorbitant height; — the indigent lazar must not there presume to shew his face, unless he can subsist on air, and sleep without any other covering than the canopy of Heaven.

Bath, — Tunbridge, — the Spaw at Scarborough, I think bear the bell from all the rest; though there are several others whose waters have distinguished virtues; but they are less frequented, 'tis possible, because being nearer home they do not afford altogether the same opportunities for some sort of freedoms which may be taken at more distant places; — but I shall say no more on this score, as it is foreign to my present purpose.

I should be glad to be informed of (what I never yet could find out) any one laudable motive that should induce a healthful wife to go to any of those shops
of

of luxury, where she can purchase nothing but new acquaintance, new modes of wasting time and money; and, it may be, new inclinations, which may prove a dear bargain to her in the end.

I know the prevalence of custom and example is very great; — I own the force of it; — but as I never could think that either of these, or both conjoin'd, had the power to give a sanction to a thing bad in itself, and teeming with many dangers and inconveniencies, I would fain persuade a wife, before she sets out on any of these excursions, to examine her heart, and ask herself the question, what advantage she expects to receive from it, which can atone for absenting herself from her husband, her children, if she has any, and her family; and I believe she will find it all consists in the pleasure of seeing and being seen by a promiscuous throng, some of whom she knows, and some whom she does not know, and the pride of shewing her opulence by the state and grandeur of her appearance: — a prudent woman, I think, need reflect no farther, to make her turn the coach from the door, — order her servants to dismount, — throw off her travelling dress, and content herself with amusements less hazardous, and more becoming her character.

The

The reputation of a wife, it may be said, is safe when accompanied in these rambles by her husband; because it will be supposed his presence is a protection from all those liberties which otherwise the freedom of the place might allow to be taken with her by the bold and assuming coxcombs of the age; but then there are so many complaisant couples, who, though they go down together, no sooner arrive than they take different routs of pleasure, and have previously agreed not to give any interruption to each other; so that a stranger, who only sees them on the walks, is puzzled to know the truly affectionate pair from those who are only so in appearance,—and often the innocent share in the censure passed upon the guilty:

Upon the whole, therefore, though I would not have a wife absolutely refuse to go with her husband, if he insists upon it, yet I should greatly praise her discretion, if by proposing to take a journey to his paternal seat; and receiving the homage of his tenants and dependants,—or by making a tour of visits among their country relations,—or by any other little stratagem her invention can suggest, she could put him off from making a party
in

in the mix'd assemblies, which only serve to intoxicate the brain, destroy all serious reflection on what ought or ought not to be done, and fill the mind with a chaos of confused, and, it often happens, the most pernicious ideas.

What I have hitherto spoken on this head has been only in relation to wives of quality and distinction; but certainly what I have said to them ought to have a double weight on those of an inferior rank, as they are much less able to support the expence, and have many more domestic cares wherewith to employ their thoughts and time.

I have heard of a fine city dame, who having prevailed on her indulgent husband to let her go to Bath, not only run him considerably in debt for rich cloaths, jewels, and other toys, to make a brilliant figure there, but also, through the vanity and ambition of playing at cards in the Pump-room with some great persons, lost her money so genteelly, that she was obliged to draw bills on her husband to a very large amount for the payment of her debts of honour, and other expences which the forms of the place made necessary to a woman who appeared as she did:—the consequence of this ramble was,

was no less than a bankruptcy ; — some pitied the poor man, but many more laughed at him ; — he is now a journeyman in the very shop of which he late was master ; and the high flown flaunting belle, now stripped of all her trinkets, is confined to a two pair of stairs room, where she works for her bread before she eats it. — I wish this story may not be found to have many parallels.



SECT. IV.

Well bearing the Passion and little Petulancies of a Husband.

WE should think it extremely odd if we saw any one go about to extinguish a fire by throwing sulphur into it ; — yet there are people weak enough to attempt to quell passion by passion ; and hence it is that we daily hear of so many dreadful accidents happening in the world ; nor is it at all to be wondered at that they should, as anger is a short madness, and no one can answer for what he may be guilty of during that absence of his reason.

Some

Some men have such a plenitude of fiery particles in their composition, that the least trifle which contradicts their present humour sets them in a blaze;—they will roar,——they will stamp,——they will say the most violent things; — but then these turbulent emotions are seldom of any long continuance;——a wife therefore must be very imprudent who makes any efforts to stem the torrent at its height;—she ought to wait 'till it subsides of itself; for, as Mr. Lee justly observes,

‘ Passions, like seas, will have their ebbs
‘ and flows.’

When once she finds the fury of the tempest is sunk into a calm, she may then, but not 'till then, endeavour, by mild arguments, utter'd in the softest terms and tone of voice she is mistress of, to convince him of the injustice he has been guilty of: — this manner of proceeding, if he be a man of sense and honour, will make him both ashamed of and sorry for his past folly, ask her pardon, and set her down in his mind as the most valuable of women.

There is also another error into which human nature is but too liable to fall, —
and

and that is a peevishness or petulancy, a disposition to find fault with every thing, and to be pleased with nothing;—it is a humour which will neither brook opposition nor be dissipated with soothing;—it is therefore best for a person who is obliged to be within the reach of it, to be entirely passive, and take no notice 'till the fit is off.

I know not, however, whether peevishness ought not to be looked upon rather as a misfortune than a fault, as it doubtless proceeds, for the most part at least, not from real nature, but from some invisible infirmity of the body, or secret anxiety of the mind; and which ever of these be the case, it deserves compassion more than blame.

The overflowing of the gall,—a melancholy wind running through the veins,—any obstruction of the heart, the liver, or secretory vessels, may occasion such a restlessness thro' the whole frame, as must render it impossible for the person affected with it to preserve an equality of behaviour; and though himself is ignorant of what he feels, can no more throw it off than he could a fit of the gout or any other disease.

Then

Then as to the mind,——who can account for the thousand,——the ten thousand, ——the numberless turns which ever-wandering, ever-active fancy takes?——Trifles lighter if possible than air, and full as fleeting, sometimes take up, in so strong a manner, both the imagination and the will, that the least disappointment, or cross accident, unhinges our best judgment, throws the temper into confusion, and consequently renders our behaviour peevish and perverse.

Pride, or shame, or various other motives, frequently make men labour to keep both the cause of their discontent, and their discontent itself, a secret; —and then, in spite of all their endeavours, it will break out in this peevishness I am speaking of.

Excellently well has that great judge of human nature, Mr. Dryden, expressed his sentiments on this occasion, in his play of *All for Love* :

- ‘ Men are but children of a larger
- ‘ growth,
- ‘ Our appetites as apt to change as
- ‘ theirs,
- ‘ And

- ‘ And full as craving too, and full as vain :
- ‘ And yet the soul, shut up in her dark
‘ room,
- ‘ Viewing so clear abroad, at home sees no-
‘ thing;
- ‘ But like a mole in earth, busy and blind,
- ‘ Works all her folly up, and casts it out-
‘ ward,
- ‘ To the world’s open view.’

But as a person much addicted to this unhappy temperament, from what source soever it may proceed, suffers much more himself, while the fit is on him, than his behaviour can inflict on others, I cannot but think that it is the indispensable duty of a wife to bear it without reproaches.

S E C T. V.

*Coquetry, or behaving in such a Manner
as may encourage Addresses of Gallan-
try.*

SOME years ago it would have been looked upon as a strange piece of absurdity to give a lesson of admonition against coquetry to a married woman : — a lady was then supposed to have thrown off, with her virgin zone, all ambition of making any future conquests ; and the men were as zealous to preserve the reputation of their wives from the attacks of gallantry, as they were of defending their liberties from the attempts of wicked and rapacious ministers. — But times are changed in regard to all these things ; — a woman now does not imagine the matrimonial contract excludes her from being admired, preferred, and addressed by as many as think her worthy their assiduities ; and husbands, many of them at least, are too polite not to allow their wives the privilege of granting to their lovers every favour except the last.

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The less use, however, a wife makes of this fashionable licence, the more she will always find her emolument in the end, as may be easily shewn by three very good reasons; the least of which must certainly have weight with every woman whose vanity does not overbalance all other considerations.

First,——Tho' there are a great many genteel husbands who, a-la-mode de Paris, affect this complaisance, yet I believe there are but very few of them who are really sincere in it;——the old British jealousy of honour will revive in their minds, and some time or other influence their actions, so as to lay greater restrictions upon their wives than otherwise they would have done, if this latitude had never been given.

Secondly,——As wretchedly depraved as is the present taste among some ladies, there are others in whose countenances and behaviour modesty still shines,——whose conduct envy cannot blemish, nor detraction lessen;——these will hold no conversation but with such, who, like themselves, are not ashamed to be thought virtuous:—and surely to a woman not quite abandoned to all sense of reputation,
it

it must afford more satisfaction to be well received by persons of this character, than to herd with that noisy, laughing, fleering tribe who haunt the Mall and other public places with a crowd of saunterers at their heels, who follow but to ridicule them :

Thirdly,—I would fain persuade every woman to keep always in her mind this saying of the poet :

- ‘ Unhappy sex, whose beauty is your
‘ snare,
- ‘ Expos’d to trials, made too frail to
‘ bear !’

Nothing is more weak than to depend too much on one’s own strength; no one can stand so sure, but that there is a possibility of falling ;——an unlucky opportunity,——an unguarded moment, may betray a woman into a fault her very soul detests, tho’ her behaviour has wantonly encouraged :—— few things of this nature remain always a secret ;—— the false step she has made may reach her husband’s ears ;——he, in revenge for this abused indulgence, sues out a divorce ;—— she is exposed to the contempt not only of the wise and virtuous, but also of her own companions, the flirt and coquet,

who will presently cry out with Olivia in the Play,

‘ Impudent creature !—to be found out !’

It gives me a most sensible concern whenever I see a young married woman, modest by nature, virtuous by education, and of a disposition to act in every thing as becomes her condition, thoughtlessly following the example of some giddy great ones, and imitating the follies which her ignorance of the world renders her incapable of knowing to be such.

This too often happens, — a young heart is apt to be dazzled by appearances; — lady Buffgroom, lady Gambol, lady Hoyden, and some other female rakes of fashion, make shining figures in all public places; they have passive husbands; — no one else has a right to cavil at their conduct; and a mind who will not be at the pains of reflection thinks every thing agreeable that they do. — Many wives there are who copy the manners of lady Starebuck; but few, alas! very few, take those of the truly illustrious lady Worthy for a pattern: — the reason is, because the one affects to make a great noise and to be talked of in the world, and the other chuses to avoid it.

But

But I shall endeavour to set the different characters of these two last-mention'd ladies in a clear light, and by stripping the one of all her borrowed lustre, and drawing the veil of obscurity from before the native loveliness of the other, leave no wife at a loss to distinguish which picture it would be most her interest to resemble.

Both of them were raised from an almost equal meanness of birth and fortune to the elevated station they now enjoy; but it was by widely different methods they attained their honours:—lady Starebuck had an artful mother, who having been well in the favour of a certain nobleman, still retained a relish for high life, or something that look'd like it, and therefore trained up the girl in the practice of all those airs which she thought might induce some person of condition to make her his mistress; or, if nothing of that kind should offer, to qualify her for the stage.

Lady Worthy is descended from honest country people, whose only estate was their industry:—her careful parents knew no guilt, nor had any higher ambition

than to get her into the service of some good family, where she might preserve those principles of religion and virtue they had instill'd into her;—their prayers were heard,—one of the best and greatest ladies in the country took her to wait upon her own person, in which station she had not long been placed before her sweet and modest behaviour, join'd to as fine a form as nature ever made, attracted the eyes of all who came to the house. —An eminent painter, who happened to be there on some occasion, and was going to draw a Salutation-piece, offered her ten guineas, in the presence of her lady, to let him take her face for the Blessed Virgin, when receiving the Hail Mary from the angel Gabriel. — To this she replied, not without being covered with blushes, That all the money in the world should not tempt her to be guilty of so much presumption and prophaneness.

Such a refusal coming from the mouth of one so young, and who it might have been expected would rather have been vain of the compliment, and glad of the present, very much astonished all who heard it, and obliged them to confess, that nobleness of sentiment and sanctity of manners were not confined to those of high blood.

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In this situation was she when lord Worthy made his addrestes to her ; — on finding his intentions honourable, she accepted the proposal with gratitude and humility ; — they were married in a short time ; — as soon as the ceremony was over, she fell upon her knees and surprized him with these words : —

‘ Permit me thus, my lord, said she, to
‘ testify the high and just sense I have of
‘ the honour you have conferr’d upon me,
‘ and beg you will assure yourself, that
‘ nothing in the power of my poor en-
‘ deavours shall be wanting, during the
‘ course of my whole life, to repay the
‘ mighty debt of love and gratitude I
‘ owe you.’

She kept her promise ; — her whole study was to make him as happy as he had made her ; and every day brought him some fresh reason to bless his choice : — they lived together for the most part at his country seat, where she was almost worshipp’d by his tenants and dependants, and equally respected as beloved by all the neighbouring gentry ; yet was she not the least vain or proud, nor took more state upon her than what just served not to degrade the dignity to which the affection of her dear lord had raised her. —

When the grand council of the nation, or his own particular affairs, demanded his presence in town, she always accompanied him; but declined going to any public places, except the Church, of which she was a constant observer, and sometimes, tho' very seldom, to the Opera and Play: — as for Ridottoes, Balls, Masquerades, and Routs, she contented herself with hearing others speak of them, without having the least desire or curiosity to make a party in any of them.

In fine, so faultless was her conduct, so enchanting was her behaviour, that all those of my lord's kindred, who at first had been highly displeased at his marrying so much beneath himself, soon found themselves obliged to confess, that in possessing her he was master of a treasure more inestimable by far than rank or fortune could have bestowed.

Behold now the reverse of this amiable model: — Lady Starebuck, who was the greatest coquet in London before her marriage, became afterwards too proud to put any restraint upon her conduct; — on the contrary, she imagined that being a wife of quality was a sufficient sanction to do whatever she had a mind to do. — Her excessive vanity made her think that the

the high station to which the caprice of a young unthinking man of fashion had elevated her, was no more than the due of her superior charms ; and that she rather added to her husband's honour than any way diminished it, by attracting a crowd of admirers. — Who that sees her in the Mall, or any other of the public walks, could take her, without being told her name, for any other than one of those creatures who go thither to expose their beauties to the hire of him who bids most :——she throws her eyes in the face of every well-dressed man she meets, turns and looks back upon him after he is passed ; if he returns the glance, she presently sets up a loud laugh ; if he seems regardless of it, and goes on,—cries out, ‘ Insensible coxcomb.’—At the Opera and Play she knows little of what is done upon the stage, her eyes and mind are employed a different way ; —— a pretty fellow sitting within the reach of her fan, is sure to feel it upon his hand, his shoulder, and sometimes to the demolition of the powdering of his wig ; while at the same time she beckons to those at a greater distance, and sends a smile of general invitation round the house.—But it would be endless to repeat the thousand apish tricks of a confirmed coquet ; —— so I shall add no more, than that I hope

no wife, to whose service this treatise is devoted, will hesitate which of these two ladies best deserves her imitation.



S E C T. VI.

Prudery.

THE too great, I might say indecent liberties, which we often see pass between the two sexes, even in public, have so shocking an appearance to women of nice and scrupulous modesty, that some of them, to avoid all imputation of encouraging the like, have run into a contrary, and almost equally faulty extreme; — I mean that sort of behaviour which is distinguished by the name of prudery, and little less than the other exposes the person to the censure as well as ridicule of the world.

Utterly impossible, indeed, is it for a woman of virtue and reputation, and who sincerely wishes to preserve both unblemished, to give the least countenance to actions which are so manifestly dangerous to the one, and so sure and immediate ruin of the other; — no, to do this would be a thing wholly inconsistent with her-

herself, either as to character or inclination, and not to be accounted for by reason or by nature.

But then, methinks, a woman of good sense and understanding will easily find ways to shun all conversation with persons of an irregular behaviour, without making any shew of her dislike; — I would not have her even mention it to those with whom she is most intimate; — nor will she need to speak, — the world will see into the motive of her reserve tho' she is silent; and at the same time that they revere her discretion, will be charm'd with her good-nature.

Nothing is more certain, as I believe every one will agree, than that a truly modest woman neither ought, nor can be delighted in the company of the audacious and the bold; — but this is not prudery; — prudery is of a quite different nature, and produces quite different effects, — as I shall presently make appear.

Prudery deforms the fair face of virtue with sourness and austerity; — it magnifies every mole-hill error to a mountainous height; — it spares nothing, — forgives nothing; — it even finds faults where there are none, and construes a
G 6 smile

smile, a nod, or the most innocent word dropt in merriment, into so many indications of levity and wantonness.

This is a propensity which is so far from doing credit to the owner, that it frequently subjects a woman to censures more severe than she has pass'd on others: — men are apt to say, that she would not be thus industrious in blazoning the false steps of her neighbour, but in order to make her own appear more upright, and that this raging virtue is all pretence, and put on only to shadow over and conceal a real vice.

Often have I heard quoted that description which the humorous poet makes Sir Hudibras give of women in the following lines :

- ‘ For ’tis in vain to think to guess
- ‘ At women by appearances,
- ‘ That paint and patch their imperfec-
- ‘ tions
- ‘ Of intellectual complexions ;
- ‘ And daub their tempers o’er with
- ‘ washes,
- ‘ As artificial as their faces.’

But notwithstanding this assertion may be literally just in regard to some women,

men, there are doubtless others, whose sincere zeal for virtue, tho' improperly conducted, puts them under the denomination of Prudes, and consequently renders them liable to suspicions injurious to their real worth.

I cannot keep myself from being concerned when I find a good meaning disgraced by an injudicious method of testifying it; — a woman of honour will sufficiently shew her disapprobation of vice and folly, by withdrawing herself from the acquaintance of all such as practise them; — there is no occasion for revilings, — softness will become her best; and it is therefore my advice, that whenever words or actions are capable of admitting two interpretations, she should always lay hold on that which will make the person in question appear least blameable.

But to return to the more immediate business of this section: — In the character of a Prude I think is summed up whatever is disagreeable to society; — a woman of this class is neither capable of enjoying any satisfaction in her own mind, nor of bestowing it on others; — for by making all the little follies and errors she can see or be told of in the world so
many

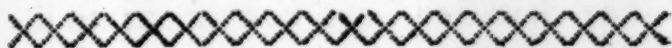
many misfortunes to herself, she is continually persecuting every one who comes near her with complaints.

If she is, in reality, as chaste as she pretends to be, that may be some consolation to her husband; but I much question whether her friends, acquaintance, her servants, will consider that one branch of virtue as a sufficient compensation for the want of all those others in which they have a greater interest.

Besides, — a Prude who preserves her conjugal fidelity entire, will always be so excessively vain and assuming as to destroy all the merit of that only virtue she perhaps is mistress of, by boasting too much of it; and consequently diminishes, by degrees, if not totally forfeits both the love and esteem which otherwise she would have a right to expect from her husband on that account.

In a word, — a married Prude, even tho' to her chastity a thousand other good qualities were added, (which, by the way, is seldom the case) can never make a man compleatly happy in possessing her; — the douceurs of connubial love agree not with the cold reserve, — the sullen austerity which all women of that character
either

either have by nature, or pretend to have; and it is more than the odds of ten against one, if a husband thus wived does not think himself excusable in endeavouring to find abroad those tender indulgencies he is denied at home.



S E C T. VII.

The Choice of Female Friends.

AS women are apt to be a good deal influenced by the manners of those women with whom they converse, this article is of more importance than it may seem to some people; and I hope that what has been said in the two preceding sections, in relation to the Coquet and the Prude, will be enough to deter every discreet wife from commencing an intimacy with persons of those dangerous characters.

The Coquet and the Prude, indeed, including between them almost every thing that ought to be avoided by the sex, leave little to be added on this score; yet would this work be incomplete, and I should but imperfectly discharge the task I have undertaken, if I omitted making mention
of

of a third reigning error among some of them, which, tho' less glaring than either of the two former, is often very pernicious, and has a great effect on the peace not only of single persons or families, but of whole neighbourhoods.

The character I am now about to delineate is that of a woman who, either having no affairs of her own to employ her time and mind, or none that she thinks worthy her regard, passes all her days in enquiring into those of other people, and running from house to house, constantly reporting at one whatever she has been informed of at another.

Such a woman as this, affecting to imagine herself welcome wherever she comes, stands upon no ceremony, but rushes in upon you at all hours, — joins in whatever company you have with you, — sits down unasked with you at your table, — presses even to your closet, and breaks in upon your very devotions, — nor is there any refuge from her but the grave.

By this means, tho' you tell her nothing, she will know every thing; and what is once known to her soon becomes the universal secret; — nor is this the worst:

worst :——as poets and painters generally draw their figures stronger than the life, so she magnifies in the repetition all she hears or sees ; and is a true engine of Fame, as that imaginary goodess is thus beautifully described by Mr. Dryden :

- ‘ Fame, the great ill, from small begin-
‘ nings grows ;
- ‘ Swift from the first, and ev’ry moment
‘ brings
- ‘ New vigour to her flights, new pinions
‘ to her wings :
- ‘ Soon grows the pigmy to gigantic size,
- ‘ Her feet on earth, her forehead in the
‘ skies.
- ‘ As many plumes as raise her lofty
‘ flight,
- ‘ So many piercing eyes enlarge her sight ;
- ‘ Millions of op’ning mouths to Fame
‘ belong,
- ‘ And ev’ry mouth is furnish’d with a
‘ tongue ;
- ‘ And round with list’ning ears the flying
‘ plague is hung,
- ‘ With court informers haunts, and royal
‘ spies ;
- ‘ Things done relates, not done she feigns,
- ‘ And mingles truth with lyes.’

But

But in plain prose,——I know of no animal more impertinent, more vexatious, or more dangerous, that can come about a house, than one of these gossips, nor that is with greater difficulty got rid of, after having once gained admittance.

There are, questionless, several other female foibles, which must render too great a communication with the persons guilty of them both troublesome and disreputable; but I shall forbear to make any mention of them, because I know it is impossible to live in the world without being under a necessity of conversing sometimes with people whose conduct cannot altogether deserve the approbation of a woman of prudence: — all therefore she can do, or all that can be required of her, is to treat them with no more than a bare civility, and enter into no intimacy or friendship but with such only as take religion for their guide, and virtue for their aim.

SECT.

S E C T. VIII.

The great Merit of Secrecy, especially in every Thing that concerns a Husband, either as to his Affairs or Person.

IT has been a kind of mode or custom, as I think, through all ages of the world, to reproach women with their incapacity of keeping a secret ; but how much soever the example of some among them may have given authority to this imputation, I cannot help being of opinion that it is a very great piece of injustice to charge upon the whole the errors of a part : I am very certain that there have been, and still are, women whose minds are too pure to be infected with the little itch of blabbing all they know ; — women, whom no temptations, — no importunities from the dearest friends, — no provocations from causeless enemies, could ever prevail upon to betray a thing which had been once reposed in them.

I cannot indeed conceive why it should be otherwise ; — there is no sex in souls,
and

and I never could hear any one good reason given by the anatomists for this pretended difference in the organical faculties: — the limbs of women, 'tis sure, are less robust than those of men ordinarily are; but that can be no argument that their intellects should be so too; because we frequently find that among men, those of the weakest and most tender constitutions are bless'd with the soundest judgement and the strongest sense.

I was once favoured with the sight of a manuscript play, which for some reasons has not been yet exhibited to the stage, wherein I very well remember the author makes his heroine defend the dignity of her sex in these lines:

- ' Tho' custom and the weakness of our sex for-
' bids
- ' To wield the lance or bend the twanging
' bow,
- ' Our souls may boast a daring great as
' yours,
- ' As fit for council too; — perhaps more
' keen
- ' And fertile in expedients; — nor less
' firm
- ' To keep what we have once resolv'd con-
' ceal'd
- ' 'Till ripe for action.'

I have

I have always been a most zealous advocate for the fair sex in this point ; and therefore, as I know them capable, so I could wish they would be equally careful in setting such a guard over their words as not to prove me in the wrong.

Whoever reposes a secret in the bosom of another, has doubtless a high idea of the honour and integrity of the person entrusted: to abuse that confidence is therefore the most mean, most ungenerous, and most ungrateful action that can be ; and what I should imagine no one who thinks at all could possibly be guilty of.

But if this treachery be unpardonable, as sure it is, even in common friendships, how much more so when between two who are united into one by the sacred ties of marriage? ——— A wife thus culpable ought not to flatter herself with retaining any place in the affection or esteem of her husband, when he shall find that what he has said to her in privacy, and as if communing with his own soul, had been by her imprudence blaz'd abroad and make the public chat, perhaps to the detriment of his affairs, or the ridicule of his person.

No

Nor is it enough that she preserves an inviolable secrecy in matters of consequence, yet at the same time talks too freely among her acquaintance on others which may seem to her insignificant in themselves; for supposing them to be so, it is indulging a bad propensity, which by degrees may become habitual, and carry her, before she is aware, to greater lengths than she imagined.

Besides, as men are very apt to be suspicious on this account, it is not unlikely that a husband may take it in his head to prove his wife's retentiveness by telling her some pretended secret, as many people try the honesty of their servants by dropping pieces of money in their way; — if she does not stand this test, he will never have a sufficient good opinion of her to entrust her in any material point, but keep her a perpetual alien to his affairs and heart.

By a woman of even common prudence it may be judg'd superfluous in me to add any thing farther on this head; — yet, as the best are liable to forget themselves sometimes, I should not think I had fully discharged the task I have undertaken, without reminding every wife that

that the same, if not a more profound secrecy, ought to be maintain'd in regard to any imperfections or blemishes she may find in the person, humour, or understanding of her husband.—Nature, some mistakes in education, or a thousand other accidents, may possibly occasion defects not dishonourable to the eye of the world, but which cannot escape the observation of a wife;— to expose him, therefore, in any of these points, which may more properly come under the denomination of misfortunes than faults, is certainly one of the most ungenerous and cruel acts of infidelity she can be guilty of, and instead of being his bosom friend renders her his worst and most bitter enemy: — in fine, to use the expression of a late great author,—a man unhappily united to a woman who does this,

‘ Like Hercules, wears an envenom’d
‘ shirt.’

To conclude: — Secrecy is so very necessary and essential a virtue in a married woman, in regard of every thing relating to her husband, that she who deviates from it in the least, not only totally destroys his peace of mind and reputation, but also at the same time loses all the dignity of her own character as a wife, puts
her

herself upon the level with a kept mistress, and deserves to be as little depended upon: — let all then, who desire to preserve the conjugal bond entire and unbroken by clamours and dissensions, and to live in that peace and harmony ordain'd by the divine institution, constantly keep in remembrance this maxim of the poet I just now quoted :

- ' Secrets of marriage should be sacred
- ' held,
- ' Their sweet and bitter by the wife
- ' conceal'd.'

It is certain that a woman of sense and virtue will never wilfully expose what is so much for her own interest and honour to conceal; yet as it is not impossible but that the very best may sometimes be hurried by passion into a forgetfulness of what is owing both to herself and husband, these remonstrances, even to them, may not be entirely useless.

SECT.

S E C T. IX.

*The Imprudence of a Wife in divulging the
Secrets of another Person when communi-
cated to her Husband.*

TO the taciturnity which every wife ought to observe, in relation both of her husband's affairs and imperfections, I think it will not be improper to subjoin, that it is necessary for her to be equally cautious not to mention any secret which has been entrusted to him, and out of the abundance of his love he may have communicated to her.

I know not whether it be not even a more faulty imprudence in a wife to betray such a confidence reposed in her husband, than to lay open any matters relating entirely to himself, as it exposes him to the just censure, not only of that friend who depended on him, but also of every one who hears of it; and makes him be considered as a man incapable of keeping a secret, — possessed of neither honour nor probity, — and unworthy of the esteem or society of persons of understanding.

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But, besides rendering his character contemptible in the world, this inadvertency in a wife is also liable to expose his person to dangers, which if she foresaw, or reflected on, would make her tremble : — an instance of this truth happen'd in a family where I once was well acquainted, and may serve as a memento to every woman to set a guard upon her lips, whenever she finds them opening to reveal what has been told her by her husband.

A young gentleman, descended of a good family, but whose estate was very much incumber'd by the mismanagement of his parents, was on the point of retrieving his misfortunes by a marriage with a young lady, who, besides eight thousand pounds in her own possession, was the only child of one of the most wealthy merchants in Bristol.

The courtship between them had been kept extremely secret ; — the lady had made no one her confidante in the affair : — the gentleman had observed the same caution, 'till a few days before that which she had appointed for the consummation of their mutual wishes, he imparted the secret of his approaching happiness to a friend

friend from whom before he had never concealed any thing.

This person had a wife whom he extremely loved, and whose integrity he doubted not ; — he knew she wished well to his friend, and that she would rejoice to hear of the good fortune he was so near enjoying, therefore communicated the secret to her almost as soon as he was informed of it himself ; but charged her at the same time to make no mention of the thing 'till it should be concluded, which she faithfully promised.

It proved, however, that her mind had not that retentive quality her fond husband imagin'd : — a young lady of her acquaintance happening to visit her that same day, and some discourse on the ill situation of the intended bridegroom's affairs coming on the tapis, the wife could not forbear crying out, — ' Well, well, ' we shall soon see him redeem all.' — ' As how?' demanded the other. — ' By ' a marriage with some great fortune,' replied she. — ' Marriage!' resumed the young lady ; — ' it must then be with ' some worn-out harridan, the relique of ' four or five husbands now rotting in ' their graves, or a toothless virgin of ' fourscore at her last prayers.' — ' Nei-

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‘ther of these I can assure you,’ said the wife;’ but a blooming young creature of ‘scarce eighteen, with a fortune of eight ‘thousand pounds in her own hands, and ‘heiress to one of the top merchants of ‘Bristol.’—‘You amaze me,’ returned the other:—‘Pray who is it?’—‘You must ‘excuse me for that, my dear,’ answered she, — ‘I am enjoined secrecy;—but I ‘can tell you the wedding will be celebrated in a few days, and then all will ‘come out; — in the mean time you ‘may have leave to guess.’

After what she had said the other could not be much at a loss to discover the person she was speaking of, and after a short pause cried out, — ‘You certainly ‘must mean Miss * * *; — the description you give corresponds with no other ‘woman in this town.’—‘You are in the ‘right, indeed,’ replied she; ‘but be sure ‘you tell nobody.’

Little did this unhappy wife imagine to whom she had blabb’d so dangerous a secret:—this lady had been courted by the gentleman in question, but her fortune not agreeing with his circumstances the match broke off; she had lov’d him, and her resentment for his not resolving to suffer every thing for her sake was adequate to
the

the tenderness she before had for him; and the opportunity now given her for rendering him as unhappy as he had made her, fill'd her with an ill-natur'd satisfaction.

She no sooner got home than she wrote an anonymous letter to the father of her rival, acquainting him with the whole story of his daughter's intended marriage. — The old gentleman was equally surprized and enraged; — he searched his daughter's cabinet, and found amorous billets and verses, which confirmed the truth of the advice he had received: — he immediately locked the young lady into her chamber, suffering no one to come near her but an old aunt, who had out-liv'd all soft desires, and was as inflexible to compassion for the woes of love as a Spanish Duenna; and on the third day, which was the same agreed upon by the lovers for the celebration of their nuptials, sent her to a place where he was pretty certain she could hold no correspondence with any one unknown to him.

Some few hours before her departure she found means to write a little letter to her lover, which she engaged her maid to deliver to him; — the contents whereof were these:

H 3

“ SIR,

“ SIR,

“ THE day which I thought should
“ have given me to you, tears me
“ for ever from you ; — the communica-
“ tion between us, by some means, is
“ discovered to my father, and I am to
“ be sent to banishment ; but to what part
“ of the kingdom, or whether out of the
“ kingdom, am not able to inform you ;
“ — I only find, by the preparations
“ made for me, that I am going a long
“ journey. — I am so carefully watched
“ that I have but just time to bid you
“ eternally farewell, and that you must
“ now give over all expectations of my
“ ever being your’s.

“ A. ****.”

P. S. “ As I find the discovery of our
“ loves has been made to my father by a
“ letter from an unknown hand, I wish
“ the misfortune may not be owing to
“ yourself in having trusted some person
“ unworthy of the secret, since it never
“ has escaped my lips, even to the faith-
“ ful maid who brings you this, and will
“ inform you of all my sufferings for
“ these three cruel days. — Once more
“ adieu ; — I shall always wish you
“ happy.”

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The poor lady had but just time to instruct her maid what she should say on the delivery of this letter, when, though it was no more than four o'clock in the morning, she was call'd down stairs, and, accompany'd by the old aunt abovemention'd, hurry'd into a coach and six, and carry'd, no one in the family, her father excepted, knew whither.

The maid about six executed her commission ; but the distraction of the lover, on hearing the account she brought him, and reading his mistress's letter, may more easily be conceived than described : — he knew he had made but one confidant, and therefore it must be that confidant by whom he was betray'd ; — he flew directly to his house, made him be rous'd from his bed, and the moment he appear'd, cry'd out with a voice scarce intelligible through rage and despair, —
' You have undone me ; — I believ'd you
' my friend and a man of honour ; —
' you have basely wrong'd my credulity,
' and are a scoundrel and a villain !

The other knowing this was the day agreed on for the marriage, had imagin'd that he call'd him to be witness of it, and was now so much surpriz'd at hearing

him speak in this manner, that he had not power to make the least reply, 'till the lover threw down the letter he had just receiv'd from Miss ****, and went on, — ' Read that, and, if you can borrow effrontery enough from hell, deny ' your perfidy, your base abuse of friendship !'

The gentleman, on having looked over that little epistle, was in the utmost consternation,——said he was extremely sorry for the accident, but was certain it had not happened through his default ; and added, that he had never mentioned the thing to any one but his wife, whose fidelity he could depend upon.

If any thing could have added to the lover's fury, the acknowledgment made by the other of having told the secret to his wife would have done it ; ——he even forgot he was the gentleman, and descended to reproaches seldom made use of but by the lowest class of men ; which the other not answering, being divided in his mind whether deserving of them or not, ——' You have ruin'd all the hopes I had ' on earth,' pursu'd the lover ; ' your blood ' is the only atonement you can make !' — With these words he drew his sword, — the other did the same ; they exchanged
several

several thrusts;—the clash of their weapons presently brought the servants into the room, but not time enough to prevent both the antagonists from being wounded.

The wife, on this dreadful alarm, jump'd out of bed, and with only a loose night-gown about her, came running in, crying,——‘What has occasioned this shocking scene?’——‘I hope,’ reply'd her husband, ‘that you yourself have not occasioned it;—and that you never mention'd what I told you of in relation to this gentleman's courtship with Miss ****?’——‘Oh heavens!’ returned she, ‘is it on this score you fought?’——‘Answer not one question with another,’ resum'd he fiercely, ‘but speak the truth at once.’

She then confess'd, that in chatting with Miss L——, she had unwarily dropp'd some hints in regard of that affair, and that the other had guess'd the rest.——‘'Tis mighty well,’ said the despairing lover; ‘then all is out, and I am no longer to seek for the author of that cruel letter which has undone me;——I know the resentment Miss L—— has to me, and must own you could not have taken more effectual measures to compleat my ruin.’

The husband, who felt more smart from his wife's confession than from the wounds he had receiv'd, was beginning to reproach her in the most bitter terms, when he was interrupted by the entrance of a surgeon who had been sent for by the servants; — to whom turning, he said, — ‘ You see here, sir, two persons who have need of your help; — but I desire you will first examine the condition of my friend.’ — This complaisance the other was far from returning; — he would not suffer himself to be touched, saying, he would receive no assistance in a house, the owners of which had so basely betray'd him; — — — and with these words flung down stairs, and went home all bleeding as he was.

Fortunately, however, neither of their wounds prov'd mortal, nor even dangerous; — — both were soon cured: but the friendship between them was never more cemented, though the husband, conscious of having been the aggressor, frequently endeavour'd it. — This disunion with a person whom he truly valued, made the folly which occasioned it to appear in its worst colours; and though he continued to live with his wife, he never could bring himself

himself either to love, or behave towards her as before this accident.

As for the lover, having sought his mistress in every place he could think of, without being able to get any intelligence of her abode, he retir'd to the southern parts of France, in order to retrieve his affairs by living cheap. — Miss ****, as it was afterwards known, had been carried into Wales, where labouring under the weight of her father's displeasure, the disappointment of her love, and the deprivation of all those satisfactions her youth had been accusom'd to enjoy, she fell into a languishing disorder, which soon took her from the world.

The fatal effects which attended this woman's inadvertency will, I hope, be a sufficient warning to every wife not to be guilty of the same ; and I therefore may spare both myself and them the trouble of any farther admonitions on that score.

S E C T. X.

Complaisance, — and how far it will be extended by the Tendernefs and Duty of a good Wife towards her Husband.

I Have taken notice that there are many people who are apt to confound ceremony with complaisance, and where they think the one improper to be used, banish the other also; — yet certainly there is a wide distinction to be made between these two things. — Ceremony, which is indeed no more than another word for form, is troublesome and ridiculous among persons who are at all intimate; but complaisance, being the constant companion of love and esteem, should never be thrown off, even amidst the greatest freedoms; and therefore I cannot be of opinion those between a husband and wife in private are any sanction for the treating each other in public with that carelessness and indifference some affect to do.

Couples of this turn of mind accompany their most obliging actions with so ungracious and forbidding an air, as might make a stander-by imagine that all
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the respect they paid each other before marriage were now entirely lost between the nuptial sheets.

I doubt, indeed, that this is too often the case; but where it happens otherwise, I cannot help believing that the outward coolness I am speaking of is for the most part occasioned merely by their fears of falling into those silly apish fondnesses which the world so much, and I must confess, so justly laughs at, and which I have attempted to describe at full in the very first section of the preceding book.

Strange, — but no less true it is, that there are people, who, for the want of a serious consideration, to avoid one extreme frequently run into another equally as bad, and still leave behind them the middle path, which reason, if exerted, would point out.

Methinks there is nothing more easy than for any two persons, of common understanding, to treat each other in public after their marriage in the same manner, or with little variation, as they did before the performance of that ceremony: — but in what fashion soever the husband may think fit to act, I would have the wife always observe this rule; — as there

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is no such sure way of gaining respect one's self, as by behaving with respect towards those from whom we would receive it,—that Heaven-directed medium,—that golden mean, as the ancients wisely term'd it, and as several of our poets have elegantly described as the only certain way to happiness and virtue.

But politeness in speech and carriage is not the only complaisance I would recommend to the practice of a wife towards a husband :——when once they come to live together, a thousand little incidents, impossible to be enumerated, will every day, almost every hour, present her with opportunities of shewing her readiness to oblige him,—none of which she should on any account let slip.

That she may find no difficulty in this, I would have her, from the first moment of her marriage, —— nay, from the first moment she resolves to be his wife, if pride, and the gaiety of her virgin state permits, to be studiously attentive to his humour in such trifles as men endeavour not to conceal, tho' they are artful enough to do so in things which they think are of greater consequence; — and thus, by foreknowing what will please him, she will have it in her power to prevent any
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injunction he might take into his head to lay upon her, and even to anticipate his very wishes.

If we look into human nature, I believe we shall find that few, if any, are without some peculiarities,——some darling whim which whoever indulges, wins their very souls ; and if those of a husband have neither any tendency to vice, nor amount to an egregious folly, so as to make him ridiculous, a wife would be highly blameable in expressing the least dissatisfaction, or seeming to wonder how his mind could give into them.

Things which in themselves are neither good nor bad, as they have no title to our applause, so they cannot justly deserve our condemnation ; and a wife should be the last person in the world who should attempt to thwart or contradict her husband in points which only serve to please himself, without hurting any one else ; therefore if she goes somewhat farther in soothing his humour than is strictly consistent with her own judgment, it is not only a pardonable but a laudable dissimulation, as it is sure to preserve peace in the family, and endear herself to the man whose affection alone can make her truly happy.

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But it behoves her to be very careful that he sees not into the petty deceit she puts upon him; — the least discovery of it would alarm his pride, make him look upon himself as treated like a child, and resent it accordingly; — she must therefore disguise all her condescensions on that score with the shew of approbation; and I think it will not be amiss if she even pretends sometimes to fall into the same caprices, provided they are not too gross, in order to prevent him from suspecting they are blameable in him.

SECT.

S E C T. XI.

Temperance and Sobriety, and the great Care should be taken to guard against all Temptations to the contrary in their very Beginning.

TEMPERANCE and Sobriety are very great virtues, yet seldom taken much notice of in a woman 'till they are lost, and then extoll'd only to render her more contemptible by the little value she has set upon them. — The reason of this is, that these excellent qualities seem natural to the sex, and born with them; so that when any one gives herself to excesses, she is thought to have gone out of her sex, and becomes a monster; which I think may be pretty plainly prov'd, by there being no appellation in our language, or in any other that I know of, whereby to distinguish a female criminal in this point. — We call a man a glutton, or a drunkard; but it would sound very uncouth to say a gluttoness, or a drunkardess; and I hope these vices will never become general enough to occasion the coining of new words for that purpose.

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An over-craving inordinate appetite for eating may possibly proceed from some inward ailment, and then it is to be pitied, and proper remedies applied ; but I believe it more often happens through the over-fondness of some mothers and nurses, who never think that they do their duty by their children, without cramming them 'till ready to burst ;—not considering that much feeding renders the body unhealthy, corpulent and deform'd ; and at the same time weakens the intellects, and debilitates the understanding.

It must be own'd, indeed, that this also is originally rather a misfortune than a fault ; but then it will soon become wholly the latter if indulg'd ; — a woman, therefore, as she grows up and discovers this propensity in herself, should endeavour to correct it by every method she can have recourse to for that end :—if she once sets herself heartily about it she will find several, — such as lacing her stays exceeding tight, and always making choice of that dish which is least agreeable to her palate ; but there is another just popt into my head, which I imagine may be more effectual than any thing she can do, and I shall therefore make no secret of it.

I dined

I dined one day with a lady who, the whole time she employed her knife and fork with incredible swiftness in dispatching a load of turkey and chine she had heap'd upon her plate, still kept a keen regard on what she had left behind, greedily devouring with her eyes all that remained in the dish, and throwing a look of envy on every one who put in for the smallest share. — My advice to such a one is, that she would have a great looking-glass fix'd opposite the seat she takes at table; and I am much mistaken, if the sight of herself in those grim attitudes I have mention'd, will not very much contribute to bring her to more moderation.

Delicacy has so great a part in the characteristic of that sex, and is so much expected, especially in those of a genteel education and way of life, that I could not omit this important article; for which I hope the eating ladies will forgive me, and, what will please me better, endeavour to reform so unbecoming a habit before it grows too much upon them.

But how disagreeable soever the love of immoderate eating may appear, and really is; yet that of drinking strong and spirituous

spirituous liquors to an excess is more inexcusable, tho' perhaps accounted less unpolite, and is productive of worse consequences : — for tho' some women may have strength enough of brain to indulge themselves very far this way without staggering as they walk, or being render'd incapable of knowing what they say or do, yet, by degrees, it will bring many infirmities upon the body, and decay the vigour of the mind, so as to make all its faculties unable to operate as beneficent Nature intended.

Innumerable instances of this melancholy truth daily happen, and are in the knowledge of every body, so that it may seem unnecessary to descend to particulars; yet in respect to the ladies, I cannot forbear making mention of one, which may serve to shew that a woman of the strictest virtue, discretion and sobriety, may, thro' mere inadvertency, be drawn into this vice, and without any intention or inclination to be so, become the sad reverse of what she was before.

It fell in the way of an eminent and very worthy citizen of my acquaintance to confer some obligations on a merchant at Genoa, in return of which that gentleman sent him over a chest of fine Italian cordials ;

dials: — my friend immediately gave them to his wife to put into the closet, which she call'd her little store-room, and was indeed the magazine of her teas, sweet-meats, cakes, and such-like things, which she always had ready for the entertainment of those who came to visit her.

Whoever has tasted these rich liquors must allow that there is somewhat perfectly enchanting to the senses in their flavour, — the excessive fragancy so far disguising the strength and danger of them, that a stranger while he is drinking imagines he only swallows the simple juice of some delicious fruits; but those acquainted with the nature of them, will never venture to take more than half a spoonful at a time, and even that but very seldom.

The good woman, like our first mother, apprehending no ill consequences from such fair appearances, made use of no efforts to resist this sweet temptation, but tapp'd first one bottle and then another, and sipp'd so frequently every day, that the whole fatal present was in a short time exhausted; — but not, alas! 'till both her looks and manners were so much transform'd as scarcely to be known; — her once sparkling eyes grew dull and lan-

languid,—her complexion pale and fallow, and her mind stupid and regardless of every avocation befitting her sex and station.

Her husband soon perceiv'd the change, and was not ignorant of the cause:—he was shock'd at it beyond measure;—he spar'd no remonstrances, no entreaties, no endeavours to wean her from the use of those pernicious liquors;—failing to persuade, he had recourse to menaces:—both were alike in vain,—she was too far lost in the unhappy infatuation; and as instruments of mischief are never wanting to those that seek them, all his care could not prevent her from receiving still fresh supplies of fuel for the already raging fire, 'till all that nervous fluid which fed the lamp of life being entirely wasted and dry'd up, she lost first the use of her limbs, then of her senses, and within the compass of a year died a most miserable object;—contemn'd by all who knew her, and unlamented by the man who had once almost ador'd her.

I should be heartily glad if this was the only example could be brought to demonstrate that the use of those destructive liquors, when grown into a habit, is impossible

possible to be broke off : — but it is too obvious a truth, that all measures taken for that purpose are ineffectual, as all who have any concern with the persons guilty of it sadly experience.

I do not therefore direct this discourse to those who have already suffer'd themselves to be enslaved by this custom ; but to those who are at present entirely free from all inclinations to so detestable a vice, to the end they may always keep so ; which can only be done by guarding against the very beginnings of all temptations to it.

Here I cannot forbear throwing in a word or two concerning the reason which some people assign for the first introduction of the too common practice of dram-drinking in these kingdoms, — a thing utterly unknown to our forefathers, except in cases of great necessity : — they tell you, that the vast quantity of tea used in most families is apt to occasion flatulencies, dejection of spirits, and a certain coldness of the stomach, which require something warm and invigorating to take after it ; — but if this be intended as an excuse for dram-drinking, it is certainly the most weak and shallow that
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can be made, and may be answer'd with a very short question, — Why then is tea so much in vogue?

Tea is doubtless a very harmless herb, and rather wholesome than the contrary, if taken moderately, as it cools the liver, promotes appetite before meals, and digestion after : — but intemperance may be shewn in every thing ; and as poisons become medicinal by being properly applied, so the most salutary productions of nature may have the effect of poisons, if used to excess.



S E C T. XII.

The extreme Folly of Affectation in every Shape.

AMONG all the various follies imputed to the female world, there is none which, without having a tendency to real vice, more exposes a woman to the derision of her neighbours than that of affectation ; or, in other words, that of endeavouring to seem any thing rather than what she is.

Those

One fine lady is of so timid a disposition, that if a fly happens to brush its little wings upon her cheeks she presently screams out;—another is so extremely tender, that she faints away on sight of a person she never saw before, because he

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has some resemblance of one for whom she has a regard: — one is modest to that excess that she hides her face behind her fan if the least merry thing be said; — another is all spirit, and skips and frisks about the room like an untam'd colt in a meadow: — one shews her great learning by spouting forth a volley of hard words, which she neither knows the meaning of herself, nor can any one else by her manner of pronouncing them; — another, who would be thought more mistress of the profound, speaks nothing, but seems wholly taken up with her own sagacious remarks on what she sees and hears: — one has so fashionable a bad sight, that she cannot distinguish the person who has her by the hand without looking through her optic: — one spoils a fine pair of eyes by rolling them into a half squint; — another distorts a very pretty mouth by screwing it into twenty corners at once: — but it would be endless to particularize the different shapes this species of folly takes, they being almost as many as there are persons on whom it operates.

For my part, whenever I meet with any of these instances in a woman of common understanding, I am tempted to believe that she gives not into such follies but

but merely to prove the influence and power of her charms over her admirers; and how far a maxim, which I remember to have read in some of our poets, may be depended on;—I think the words are these:

- ‘No follies fatal to the fair can prove;
- ‘All things are beauties in the nymph we
‘love.’

She may be mistaken, however;—but no matter;—let both the young and the old, provided they are not married, play over all their tricks, and disguise, or rather disgrace nature as much as they please:—my concern at present is only with the wives, whom I would fain dissuade from making such dangerous experiments, lest they should be unhappily convinced, that many things which are overlooked by a lover will not be forgiven by a husband.

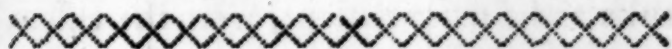
But there is no sort of affectation whatsoever in which a wife can be so much an enemy to herself, as to be guilty of counterfeiting indisposition.---A man, indeed, who sees the object of his tenderest wishes labour, as he imagines, under some great pain or sickness, will doubtless be sensibly afflicted, and double his assiduities in hopes of alleviating her anguish; and so

far her vanity may be gratified for a time : but the pleasure will scarcely be of long continuance ;——nothing being more certain, than that complaints of any kind, when often repeated, will, by degrees, lose a very great part, if not all their force upon the person to whom they are made.

It must be allow'd that the husband of a sick wife has a very uncomfortable life : —he is deprived of a chearful companion at his bed and board, — a faithful friend in whom he might repose his dearest secrets,—a careful manager of his household affairs ;—and, in fine, of every happiness, — every convenience he proposed to himself in marriage : —nor is this all ; — the expensive visits of physicians, — the enormous bills of apothecaries, and other consequential charges, are great additions to his vexation, and are ready to make him wish for the undertaker to put the finishing stroke.

Sickness, however, when real, has the highest claim to tenderness and compassion ; and whatever troubles it occasions, ought to be submitted to with patience and good-nature : —— but how can the imaginary malade answer to herself the putting her husband's love and fortitude
to

to so unnecessary a test? — And what share either of his affection or esteem can she expect to find, if once it happens to be detected?



S E C T. XIII.

The Stupidity of consulting with, or giving Credit to Persons who pretend to foretel future Events.

I THINK that there is no weakness more general, or more early takes up the mind, especially of the softer sex, than the vain desire of foreknowing the accidents of their future lives; and as marriage is the first thing thought upon, a girl no sooner comes into her teens, than she fasts on St. Agnes' day, makes the dumb cake, or some other old wife's traditional prescription, in order to dream of the man who is to be her husband.

This, among other childish fancies, would be excuseable if left off with the bib-and-apron; but the impatience of looking into the seeds of time, as the poet justly terms it, remains, and grows up with them to maturity; when their ideas being enlarg'd, and pursuits of various

kinds in view, they become eager and solicitous to know the end of every thing, even before it is well begun.

On this they run to predictors of all ranks and denominations, from the calculators of nativities down to the petty throwers of coffee-grounds, — anxious to anticipate good fortune, or hoping to avert the bad.—How ridiculous is such an infatuation! as if the decrees of Providence were dealt among these wretches to be retail'd out at their good pleasure. — It would be well if the purchasers would always keep in mind these lines of Mr. Dryden :

- ‘ On what strange grounds we build our
‘ hopes and fears !
- ‘ Man’s life is all a mist, and in the
‘ dark
- ‘ Our fortunes meet us.
- ‘ If fate be not, then what can we
‘ foresee ?
- ‘ And how can we avoid it, if it be ?’

But supposing the planets to be second causes under the Divine Dispensation, and to have indeed all that influence over human actions which many, even among the learned world, have in all ages ascribed to them, and I will not therefore take
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upon me to deny; would it not be the most vain and stupid arrogance in us to imagine, that by fore-knowing any disagreeable event they intended for us, we could reverse the doom prefix'd at our natiivities? — Might we not as well expect to turn with a finger the motion of those vast bodies, and direct their course through æther according to our humour, give velocity to Saturn, and clap leaden plumbets on the nimble Mercury.

There are some people who think they excuse themselves by saying, that they do not consult the stars with any presumptuous hopes of changing the fate allotted for them; but because that, by being previously made acquainted with such misfortunes as are ordain'd for them, they may be the better enabled to support them with moderation.

This is also a very idle pretence, and if true would be far from answering the end proposed by it:—I believe there is no one person in the world born under such cruel and malevolent aspects as not to know some intervals of happiness;—and sure it would be the extremest absurdity for any one to wish to poison the present tranquility by the thoughts of approaching woes.

The frequency of suicidism is too glaring a proof not to convince us that every one is not endued with courage to face ill fortune:—If then, the bare apprehensions of falling into any calamity or distress be sufficient to enforce such acts of desperation in many, — how many more would the dreadful certainty undo?—I am afraid that, as the number of the unhappy by far exceeds that of the more lucky, our streets would be much less populous than they are at present, if those who are now oblig'd, for want of room, to jostle against each other as they pass, were permitted to see the mischiefs that stalk behind, and are perhaps just ready to lay hold on them.

With equal tenderness as wisdom, therefore, does the supreme and omniscient Creator and Disposer of all things conceal from the knowledge of frail and irresolute mankind, those afflictions which either he thinks fit to lay upon them as trials of their patience, or are brought upon them by their own faulty conduct and transgressions.—The inimitable Mr. Abraham Cowley has an excellent sentiment on this occasion, which I think I should be wanting to my subject not to quote :

• In

- ‘ In whatsoever character
‘ The Book of Fate is writ,
‘ ’Tis well we understand not it ;
‘ We should grow mad with too much learn-
‘ ing there.
‘ Upon the brink of every ill we did fore-
‘ see,
‘ Undecently and foolishly,
‘ We should stand shivering, and but slowly
‘ venture
‘ The fatal flood to enter.
‘ Since willing or unwilling, we must do it,
‘ They feel less cold and pain who plunge at
‘ once into it.’

But this is arguing with too much seriousness on a matter which deserves to be treated only as mere bagatelle : — those very ladies who are themselves the greatest benefactresses to Astrologers, affect in conversation to think of the whole science as a chimera, and its pretended professors as impostors, and laugh at what they but too much depend upon.

Few, indeed, there are who will confess that they ever consulted with any of those fortune-mongers, or order’d any scheme of the heavens to be erected for them ; and if detected, pretend they did it only to divert themselves.—I must do them the justice to say, that I believe a

great many of them have at first no other view ;—but then those creatures, either having got some intimation of the circumstances of the person who consults them, or in saying a great deal, by chance say something which has the face of truth, and that gives a credit to the whole ;—so that she who went thither merely for the sake of amusement, is tempted to go again and again, in expectation of hearing still something more for the satisfaction of her curiosity ; till by degrees she is wrought upon to put an entire faith in every thing deliver'd by the mouth of the pretended forcerer, and will undertake no affair,—commence no friendships,—enter into no engagements, without having his opinion how far the stars approve what she is about to do.

By this means many unequal matches have been formed ; — many promising ones broke off, — many couples long happy in marriage been eternally disunited ;—many whole families set at variance ;—many affairs of the greatest moment travers'd ;—many innocent persons suspected ;—and those capable of the most base actions introduced to favour :—in fine, there is no dissension,—no jealousies, — no vexatious accidents, — no mischiefs, of what kind soever, which either
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through the folly of the consulter, or the villainy of the consulted, have not sometimes come to pass.

Among the common cant of predictions, this frequently is one,—‘ Madam, you have secret enemies who will endeavour to do you some prejudice.’—The consulter then asks what sort of people; and on some character or other being given, she presently runs through in her mind the whole round of her acquaintance; and wherever she finds any one to answer in the least to the description given by the fortune-teller, there fixes her resentment, even tho’ it should be her own husband,—brother,—sister, or any other near and dear relation, and perhaps is sometimes hurried by a passion to return imaginary wrongs with real ones.

A wife, therefore, who gives into this infatuation is in great danger of rendering herself, her husband, her whole family and best friends unhappy;—never to have peace in her own bosom, nor to suffer those who have any connection with her to enjoy it; and, indeed, of being deprived of every thing truly valuable to a virtuous woman.

As there is a strange propensity in people addicted to this folly, and I believe in all who are guilty of any bad customs, to use their utmost endeavours to draw others into the same, I cannot conclude without earnestly exhorting every married woman never to suffer herself to be prevailed upon by the persuasions of her most intimate associates to enter within the doors of any of these pretended sooth-sayers, who regard not whose reputations they destroy, or whose ruin they project, provided they can drain their purses, and procure a scandalous subsistence for themselves.

I think there now remains nothing farther for me to add on this disagreeable topic, a topic which I sincerely wish some instances within the compass of my own knowledge had not made me find it necessary to mention;—but I have now done with it; and hope that no woman, for whose person or character I have the least regard, will ever expose both in that ridiculous manner elegantly describ'd by a late noble poet;

- ‘ And mix, unthinking, with the numerous
‘ shoals
- ‘ Of those who pay to be reputed fools.’

SECT.

S E C T. XIV.

*The Beauty and good Effect of Chearfulness
in a Wife.*

THERE is a possibility for a woman, tho' endow'd with a thousand virtues, — a thousand perfections, to fail giving all the satisfaction she wishes to her husband, if nature has unhappily render'd her deficient in one particular quality of the mind to actuate her behaviour.

She may be chaste, — temperate, — discreet, — a lover of home, — a good œconomist, — an affectionate wife, — a careful mother ;—in fine, may perform all the duties of her station with the utmost exactness : yet if what she does be not accompanied with chearfulness, she will deprive herself of half the praises she deserves ; and the man she would make happy, of the pleasure she might otherwise be capable of affording him.

The famous Mrs. Behn, who it must be own'd was no mean judge of what is agreeable to the humour of mankind, in enumerating the qualifications which constitute

stitute a woman born to give delight, places chearfulness among the principal.— These are her words upon that head :

‘ Chearful as birds that welcome in the
‘ morn.’

Another author also of a much later date, and at least of equal reputation, gives this description of it :

‘ Chearfulness is the soul of every
‘ other charm :—without it conversation
‘ is languid, — wine tasteless, — beauty
‘ insipid,—and even wit itself spiritless.’

The poets and painters, both ancient and modern, have always express’d so high an idea of chearfulness, that Venus, Cupid, the Graces, and every emblematical figure or hieroglyphic of love and beauty, in all their pictures and picturesque descriptions, had their faces constantly adorn’d with smiles.

But to quit the sublime, and descend to the more plain and familiar way of reasoning: it is certain, that a gracious manner, which indeed is no other than chearfulness, either in discharging a duty, or conferring an obligation, greatly adds to the merit of both:—but, alas ! all have
not

not this happy talent in their power, tho' their hearts may be equally good, and their intentions perfectly sincere.

Much, therefore, is that woman to be pitied, whose true value is disgraced by her having the misfortune of a contracted brow:—few, like Barstianus, chuse the iron chest;—an outside glare is apt to take the eye, and the affections of the mind pursue it.

When this is not a defect in nature I think it possible to be rectified, as I take the outward indications of a chearful disposition to consist chiefly in the eyes and the tone of voice, neither of which there is a possibility of changing; but when it proceeds from an ill habit, or a narrow and gloomy education, care and a constant application may do much.

But I am sorry to say, that the pride of virtue in some women destroys their affability:—conscious of having done their duty in the greater points, they think it beneath them to study or put in practice those little douceurs, and nameless tenderesses, which are in fact of the most consequence to endear them to their husbands; and in this case, whatever they want by nature they will never supply by art.

The husband of such a wife will be apt to look on her best actions as merely owing to the respect she has for her own character, rather than to any love she has for him ; and in this opinion he will think of her with indifference, and treat her with no more than a cold civility.

Chearfulness, on the contrary, as it testifies she takes a pleasure in obliging him, will also make him take a pleasure in receiving every mark of kindness she bestows ; and this alone can make the happiness of a wedded life compleat ; — without it, nor wealth, nor grandeur can give perfect joy ; — with it, the humble villager is blest ; and it is indeed among these latter that a sincere cheerfulness is chiefly to be found.—Mr. Cowley doubtless thought so when he described the pleasures of a rural life, — in which fine poem there are some lines very proper for the observation of every wife ; and I shall therefore insert them for the benefit of those who may not happen to have read them.

- ‘ Here if a chaste and clean, tho’ homely
- ‘ wife
- ‘ Crown the rich blessings of a husband’s
- ‘ life;
- ‘ Who

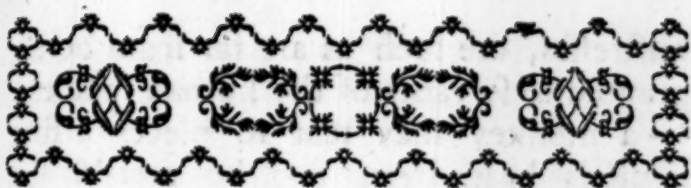
- ' Who makes her children and her house
' her care;
- ' And joyfully the work of life does
' share;
- ' Nor thinks herself too noble, nor too
' fine
- ' To pin the sheepfold, or to milk the
' kine;
- ' Who waits at door against her hus-
' band come
- ' From rural duties, late and weary'd,
' home,
- ' Where she receives him with a kind
' embrace,
- ' A chearful fire, and a more chearful
' face;
- ' And fills the bowl up to her homely
' lord,
- ' And with domestic plenty loads the
' board:
- ' Not all the lustful shell-fish of the
' sea,
- ' Dress'd by the wanton hand of
' Luxury;
- ' Nor Ortolans, nor Godwits, nor the
' rest
- ' Of costly names that glorify a
' feast,
- ' Are at a prince's table better cheer
' Than lamb and kid, lettice, and olives.
' here.'

Thus

Thus does this great poet make a chearful temper the source of all contentment :—let not the best wife satisfy herself with being a rough diamond, but let a modest gaiety polish and brighten all she does ;— let a perpetual chearfulness dance in her eyes, and dimple on her cheeks ; and no reserve, no austerity, no fullness, ever gain admittance within the circle of the conjugal hoop.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

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THE
W I F E.

B O O K III.



S E C T. I.

On being over-fond of Animals.

 MONG all the various foibles of which the softer sex are but too justly accus'd, I know of none more preposterous than the immoderate fondness shewn to Monkeys, dogs, and other animals; — creatures which were not made to be carefs'd, and have no higher claim from nature than barely not to be abus'd or mercilessly treated.

Yet the privilege, the immunities, the indulgencies which they enjoy under some mistresses,

mistresses, are such as are far from being granted to servants of the human species : — a monkey may tear to pieces a fine Brussels head-dress, and be prais'd for hit wit; while the poor chamber-maid has a slap on the face, — is call'd oaf, — awkward monster, and a thousand such like names, if not turn'd out of door, only for having stuck a pin awry, or misplaced a curl.

But in how odd a light must the husband of that woman appear, who, while he is entertaining her perhaps on some important affair, instead of answering him, is all the time playing with her lap-dog, and after he has been talking for half an hour together, cries out, — ‘ What did you say, my dear ? — I protest I did not hear you : ’ — on which he is oblig'd to repeat all he has been speaking, and 'tis very likely with as little success as before. — Certainly there can be no medium in the understanding of a man who can bear with any tolerable degree of patience such treatment from a wife ; — he must either be quite a fool, or endued with an uncommon share of philosophy and fortitude ; and if the latter, nothing but the most low contempt could restrain him from giving her some marks of his resentment,

ment, and throwing her favourite dog out of the window.

I have heard of a certain lady of distinction, who we may suppose lov'd her husband very well, yet gave so much the preference to a harlequin bitch she kept, call'd Miss Chloe, that she not only help'd her to the best bits at table, but also let her lie in the same bed; which last act of complaisance was a matter of such great offence to her husband, especially as the creature was one of the largest of the kind, and 'tis likely did not behave so quietly as was consistent with the regard he had for his repose, — that he made many remonstrances to his lady on the inconvenience of lying three in a bed; but all he could urge on that subject was ineffectual; she would not consent to be separated one moment from her dear Miss Chloe; on which he resolv'd to sleep in another chamber, and accordingly did so; where, it is more than whisper'd, he prevail'd on the chamber-maid to supply her lady's place.

Without seeing it one would scarce be brought to believe the ridiculous fondness with which some women treat their dogs, tho' the folly does not always pass without a flier even to their face. — As I was
I sitting

sitting on a bench one day in the Park, I happened to be witness of a passage, which, tho' some may think ill-nature, gave me a good deal of satisfaction. — A well-dressed woman, and who in her air and mien had the appearance of a person of some fashion, came down the walk, holding a small Dutch mastiff under her arm, with which she was playing and talking to as nurses do to their children : as she came pretty near the place where I was, she was met by two smart young gentlemen, one of whom plucking off his hat, said to her, — ‘ Pray, madam, is that ‘ little creature your own ? ’ — ‘ Yes, sir,’ replied she, and stopt, no doubt expecting some fine compliment would be made to Pug ; but instead of that, he cried, — ‘ I thought indeed, madam, it was your ‘ own, it is so very like you ; ’ — then took hold of his companion, and they both march’d off with a loud laugh. — This sarcasm was the more severe as it was pretty just ; for the lady had a pair of large black eyes, a pretty thick nose a little turn’d up, and a complexion none of the fairest. — She seem’d very much disconcerted ; but whether the affront she received made any alteration in her behaviour to Pug I cannot pretend to determine, as I never saw her afterwards.

And

And now I am got upon the adventures of the canine race, a story occurs to my remembrance, which, tho' somewhat uncleanly, has a pleasantry in it which I hope will make my excuse for repeating.

One of the most celebrated belles of the beau-monde had a spaniel, of which she was infinitely more fond than of any of her children; ——— the creature was so small, that whenever she went on her visits she always carried it in her pocket, where it lay very snug, no part of it appearing but the short face and long ears: —Cupid, for so he was called, was much admir'd by all that saw him, and in complaisance to his lady, not unwelcome wherever he came; but misfortunes will, some time or other, happen to every one; so Cupid could not expect to be always exempt: — neither the quality of his lady, his own personal perfections, or the name he bore, were sufficient to secure him from falling one day into a sad disgrace.

Just as his lady had enter'd the crowded drawing-room of a person of condition, an unusual flavour saluted the noses of all the company; every one look'd one upon another, and could not presently distinguish whence it proceeded: — she was
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the first that discovered the truth, and cried out,——‘ Oh, Heavens ! — Cupid ‘ has done a paw trick, I am afraid ;’—— then turning to the lady she came to visit, added,——‘ I must beg the assistance of ‘ your ladyship’s woman to untie my ‘ pockets.’ — The bell was immediately rung,—— the waiting-woman came in, and the lady was eas’d of her offensive burthen.——‘ Oh, Mrs. Primwell, said ‘ she, Cupid has been very naughty ; — ‘ the poor creature I believe has got the ‘ cholic :——I am sure they gave him ‘ four cream in his tea this morning, ‘ tho’ my impudent wench assur’d me it ‘ was sweet, and I did not taste it as I ‘ never drink any myself ; — but pray be ‘ so good as to take him into your cham- ‘ ber, and cleanse him from this impurity, ‘ and send my servant home with these ‘ filthy pockets, and let him bring me ‘ a pair of clean ones.’——The woman having taken them off, was leaving the room to do as she was desired, tho’ possibly not without some reluctance ; but before she reached the door, the other called to her, saying, —— ‘ Dear Mrs. ‘ Primwell, I beg after you have made ‘ him clean you will dip a towel in some ‘ orange-flower water, and wash him well ; ‘ I always keep a jar to be ready on such ‘ occasions.’

While

While she was giving these orders, the lady of the house ordered some frankincense to be put in a chafing-dish and brought into the room, and the rest of the company made their own observations on this accident.—Cupid's mistress made many apologies for her little favourite; but there were few present who could so well keep their countenances as to prevent her from being in a good deal of confusion: — it was soon dissipated, however, and Cupid restor'd to favour, in which he continued 'till he died; and then, to shew the regard she had for him, was honoured with a sumptuous funeral.

But to be more serious: — A fondness for the brute creation is of late years become so general, that a monkey, a dog, a squirrel, a dormouse, or a squawling paroquet, are almost always part of the appendages of a fine lady: — indeed I am sometimes tempted to think, that this is owing more to their desire of being taken notice of than real love to those animals, especially when I see them make choice of such as are rather uncouth than pleasing to the sight. — I know one who always keeps a frog in her dining-room, and has every day fresh wads of grass brought in for it to hop upon; and going

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one day to the house of a gentleman, with whom I had some business, I found his wife with a huge snake twisted round her neck, and sucking bread and sugar'd milk out of her mouth; — which sight put me in mind of what Mr. Waller wrote extempore on a lady, who it seems had the same passion for these hideous animals.—The lines, I think, are beautiful, as indeed all are that came from him:

- * Take heed, fair Eve, you do not
- * make
- * Another tempter of this snake;
- * A marble one, so warm'd, would
- * speak.

Her husband came into the room presently after I did, and I discover'd by his looks was not well pleased I had surprized his wife in that attitude: — I know he is a man of too much sense to think himself perfectly happy with a woman capable of such a weakness; — but she brought him a handsome fortune, and he has still great dependences on some of her kindred; and to these motives, I fear, it is that she is chiefly indebted for the civilities he treats her with.

It is, indeed, hardly possible for a man to have any real regard for a wife who
he

he sees prefers animals, reptiles, the very lowest and most contemptible of the works of nature, to himself:—I would therefore admonish every married woman to take into serious consideration what is owing to her own and her husband's character, and she will then be ashamed to lessen both for the sake of an idle whim, a mere caprice.



S E C T. II.

The Difference between an inquisitive and speculative Disposition, and how far both stand in need of being corrected by Reason.

INQUISITIVENESS, according to the vulgar acceptance of the word, is an insatiate desire of prying into other people's concerns; and as thus understood is a most vile propensity. A woman who indulges it can neither be easy herself, nor suffer her neighbours or acquaintance to be so:—she will be restless, because not always able to find means to gratify her curiosity; and the persons she visits, because they are afraid of her, obliged to be under a perpetual restraint before her, and to

guard their secrets with as much care as they would their money from a thief.

Besides, those who love to hear, love also to report ; — they want not to make discoveries but for the pleasure of revealing them : — whatever chance or design betrays to them, they immediately proclaim to others, and plume themselves on being the first who bring the news. — But this comes so near the gossip I have described in the seventh section of the preceding book, that I need add nothing farther on it here, — only that as I there advised all wives to refrain the company of such a woman, so I would much more strenuously persuade them, not to be guilty of any thing which might draw so odious a character on themselves.

But troublesome and dangerous as an inquisitive disposition for the most part proves, yet if put under the direction of judgment and right reason, it may be made a very useful and praise-worthy qualification, greatly improving of the manners, and agreeable instead of irksome to society : — a mind impatient of knowing all it can, and eager to extend itself, is equally capable of being employed in the best, as in the worst researches : —

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it is therefore wholly owing to the bent our enquiries take, that inquisitiveness becomes either a virtue or a vice.

A woman who is endowed with such an activity of thought as not to be confined within the narrow bounds of her own particular affairs, has no occasion to dive into those of other people: — Nature spreads an ample field before her, where she is at liberty to pick out objects to satisfy her curiosity, which will afford her much more pleasure in the search, as well as more profit in the acquisition.

When time hangs heavy on her hands, and books fail to amuse, instead of observing what cloaths her neighbours wear, what company they keep, and how their tables are supplied; or enquiring who courts such a one; who is about to take a wife, and who to part with one; let her walk into the fields, the groves, the gardens, and see what the inhabitants of those realms are doing: — let her follow the laborious ant to its little grainery, there behold with what indefatigable pains it bears and hoards its winter store, and from this insect learn industry and œconomy: — let her admire the charms of constant faithful love in the ever-cooing turtle; — let her be ashamed of finding

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herself

herself out-done in maternal care and tenderness by the whole feathered race. — These, and a thousand other such discoveries, she may both make and reveal without offence.

I know that very many ladies will cry out against this doctrine; but I appeal to any husband, if he would not be much better pleased his wife should join company with the grasshoppers and butterflies of the woods, than with those of the Mall, more gaudy, more fluttering and unmeaning, than the other.

I think I have now proved to a demonstration, that inquisitiveness, bad as it seems, may be converted into a real good, if properly applied. — As for the speculative disposition, every one is ready to applaud it; — they cry, it denotes a nobleness of mind and a great capacity: — it certainly does so; — but then it is no less certain, that if not guided and corrected by a sound judgment, it is liable to produce as ill, if not worse effects than the other.

A person of a speculative disposition, if religiously inclined, can very seldom forbear endeavouring to explore those things which Heaven thinks fit to conceal from human

human understanding; — they would unravel the secrets of Divine Providence; — they would comprehend what is incomprehensible, perhaps even to angels; and bring within the compass of their shallow reason the mystic wonders of the Almighty attributes, — either not knowing, or not regarding what Mr Pope so justly says upon this subject:

‘ He that could fathom God were more
 ‘ than He.’

Thus is thought, by being strained beyond its reach, rendered at length incapable of acting, — the power of recollection entirely lost, and the mind bewildered in a maze of errors; — and this appears to me as the most probable reason can be assigned for our seeing so many people, who either believe too little or too much, and become sceptics or enthusiasts.

There are others again, with a kind of philosophic turn, who have their minds strangely busy about the planets; — they would fain know whether those vast and luminous orbs which roll above our heads are habitable worlds or not; — if they are, whether possessed by angels, men, or the ghosts of those who once

were men ; — explore the customs, laws, and manners of those distant regions, and would gladly hazard a journey thro' Æther, if the ganges of Gonzales could be procured to convey them to the moon. — As the former of these speculatives distract their brains with books of controversy, so do this latter class the same with astronomical conjectures, and Fontenelle's plurality of worlds.

In fine, — a woman who once gets either of these fancies into her head is lost to every thing besides ; — her husband, children, family, friends, acquaintance, with all the necessary avocations and duties of her station, seem altogether unworthy her regard ; — she lives in the clouds ; and it is with difficulty she is dragged down to the performance of any thing required of her below.

Thus may a misguided speculation render a woman as useless in her sphere of life, and as troublesome to all who have any concern with her, as inquisitiveness can do ; — both are alike virtues when under the government of reason, and both are vices when in rebellion to that sovereign power.

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Methinks it is downright madness to waste any part of time in seeking after things impossible to be attained; or if attained could be of no real service: — a married woman, above all others, should avoid this error; — it becomes her to center her whole studies within the compass of her own walls; — to enquire no farther than into the humours and inclinations of her husband and children, to the end she may know how to oblige those she finds in him, and rectify whatever is amiss in them; and not attempt to extend her speculations beyond her family, and those things which are entrusted to her management.

Most wives, I believe, will find this a sufficient employment; and as for those few whose time may happen to be less occupied, there are various amusements to be made choice of, which will appear more befitting their sex and character than those I have been speaking of.

S E C T. III.

The Imprudence of indulging too flattering Expectations in Marriage.

VANITY and credulity have been, and I fear ever will be, the ruin of many a woman's peace of mind: — the men, indeed, are very cruel in this point, and impose too much on the easy nature of that sex; — a lover knows the weak side of his mistress, and never fails to attack her on it with all the arts he is capable of putting in practice; and it must be owned, that very few of them are novices this way. — In the addresses he makes to her, he mingles a thousand vows and imprecations of eternal truth, — eternal adoration; — swears she shall ever be the sovereign of his soul, — the only directress of his very will, and calls all the powers of heaven and earth to witness what he says; — sighs, tears, the most submissive postures, give a double energy to his words: — she too readily believes, and expects to receive, when a wife, a confirmation of all she has been promised while a mistress,

But

But alas ! the conduct, even in the best of husbands, proves that all the fine things they said beforehand were but words of course : — the tables, after marriage, are reversed ; the goddess is now stripped of all her divinity ; — it is no more her province to impose laws, but to receive them, — and happy, very happy may she think herself, whose yoke is softened by goodness and indulgence.

I would not have any one suppose by this, as if I meant to insinuate all men were of the same opinion with Morat in the tragedy, that

- * Marriage is but the pleasure of a day ;
- * The metal's base, the gilding worn
* away.'

No ; Heaven forbid I should intend any such matter ; that would be doing the utmost injustice to one sex, and frightening the other from entering into a state truly honourable, convenient, and capable of affording the greatest felicity, if both parties concur to promote it : — I should be extremely sorry to say any thing that might inculcate ideas in the head of any one person to the disadvantage of that sacred institution.

On the contrary, I am certain that there are very many husbands whose affection is not at all diminished by their being in full possession of the object, tho' the impatiencies, the hopes, the fears, and all the tumultuous emotions of that passion cease; — and how, indeed, should they any longer exist, when the suspense that occasioned them is no more? — Can a man wish for what he has obtained? — Can he doubt the identity of a blessing he feels within his arms? — Sure to do this, would be an inconsistency in nature!

Well, but, — say some ladies who have been vain enough to imagine that the god of love would work miracles in their favour, — if the anxieties of a lover end in the enjoyment of his desire as a husband, the ardours, the transports of his rewarded flame ought to remain for ever. — To which I reply, — that this also is impossible; — the mind cannot support a perpetual hurry; — the spirits of course must flag after a violent agitation; — those wild raptures, — those madding extasies, which the first possession of a long-sought happiness inspire, must by degrees subside: where they continue for any length of time they must be fatal either
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to life or reason ; — death or distraction must be the unfailing consequence.

Besides, a man enflamed with the most sincere and vehement passion that ever was, always pretends to feel much more than he does, in his days of courtship ; but it would be ridiculous in him, after he becomes a husband, to entertain his wife with those romantic hyperboles, which he found necessary to address her with as a mistress ; and however pleasing it might be to her, would make them both be laughed at by all their acquaintance.

In a word, if she has no reason to believe he likes any other woman so well as herself, and gives her all the marks in his power of a sincere and tender friendship, it is all she ought to expect from him, and that the most beautiful of the sex, after marriage could ever boast of.

The ingenious Mr Butler, in his excellent poem of Hudibras, has some lines on this subject, which, though a little indelicate, are very much to the purpose, and I would have every married woman, for the sake of her own peace of mind, keep them in perpetual remembrance :

• Marriage

- ‘ Marriage is but a beast, some say,
- ‘ That carries double in foul way ;
- ‘ Therefore ’tis not to be admir’d
- ‘ It should so suddenly be tir’d ;
- ‘ For after matrimony’s over,
- ‘ He that holds out but half a lover,
- ‘ Deserves for every minute more
- ‘ Than for an age of love before.’

Upon the whole, I do not think that there can be a greater enemy to hymeneal happiness, than this of an idle expectation of more than is in nature or in practice to be found; — that wife who is guilty of it, is herself the destroyer of what she aims to inspire; and the fullness, coldness, and reproaches, with which she returns his imaginary neglect, tire out all the remains of affection he had for her, and are also his excuse for treating her with a real indifference.

Nor is this the worst consequence that may possibly befall: — the same vanity, and pride of conscious merit, which makes her expect to be always complimented with a shew of adoration by her husband, on failing to receive it from him, may influence her to encourage the flatteries of others, who vow themselves her eternally devoted slaves, forgetting that they are
men

men as well as her husband, and if permitted the same liberties, would behave towards her in the same, or perhaps in a much more careless manner. — A woman of this way of thinking would do well to repeat often within herself that just and pathetic maxim which Mr Dryden puts into the mouth of Jove:

- ‘ I gave them pride to make mankind their
‘ slave;
- ‘ But, in exchange, to man I flattery gave :
- ‘ The humblest lover, when he lowest lies,
- ‘ But kneels to conquer, and but falls to
‘ rise.’

Among too many others, the town has been presented with a very memorable instance of the unhappiness which vanity of this kind brings upon whole families: — A lady of birth and fortune, who had as much beauty, and more wit than half her sex besides could boast of, was married while very young, to a person of condition, whom she infinitely loved, and by whom she was equally beloved; — no marriage could afford a prospect of greater felicity: — but he too soon forgot the devoirs he had paid her as a lover, and though she was still as dear to him as before,

fore, could not keep himself from shewing marks of authority, which as her husband he had a right to take upon him.

Her haughty temper could but ill endure this change;—she upbraided him in the severest terms;—he asserted his prerogative, and gave every day some fresh proof, that he was determined to maintain it;—she, in return, studied nothing more than to contradict his will:—hence ensued frequent quarrels; and the most poignant repartees passed between them, which being too well remembered by each, drew on a mutal indifference, and, by degrees, a perfect disdain for each other.

Their animosity soon became the public talk of the town, and many were emboldened by it to make addreses to her which were no way consistent with her honour to receive; but her vanity was flattered, and her husband offended by them; and these were two points to which she now paid more regard than to her own character, or the honour of her family.

This unhappy pair had children, who felt the most terrible effects of their parents disagreement;—hated by their father,

father, because he suspected they were not of his own begetting, and hated by their mother, probably because she knew them to be so; no indulgence was shewn their infant years; no care taken of their education when they arrived at an age proper to receive it; but the poor suffering innocents crept about the house more like the children of charity than the descendants of two noble families, and born to fortunes equal to their extraction.

Whether this lady was in fact guilty of wronging her husband's bed, I will not take upon me to determine; but this is certain, that if she had any amours, they were conducted with so much art and secrecy that he never could get any proofs sufficient to enable him to sue out a divorce, though for several years he was indefatigable in his endeavours for that purpose.

The manner of their living together, however, in time became so irksome to both, that they at last agreed in one thing, which was, to separate for ever: — writings were accordingly drawn between them, after which she left England in search of new conquests and new adventures; — he retired to his country-seat, with an intention to pass the remainder of
his

his days in solitude; and the children were left to the care of an old servant, where they were fed and cloathed, but little else done for them,

I hope this example, joined to what I have said, will keep every new-married woman from being self-deceived by the vain expectations of receiving the same assiduities from her husband after marriage as before; and, as a disappointment in that case is inevitable, she will thereby avoid a shock, which, if productive of no worse consequences, cannot but be very grievous to her.

SECT.

S E C T. IV.

The immoderate Love of Gaming, and its pernicious Consequences.

AN immoderate love of gaming among men has ever been looked upon by all wise persons, and lovers of regularity, not only as an enormous folly, but a vice also; — even those who practise it can find no excuses for their doing so; — they curse it when they lose their money, and are ashamed to praise it when they win.

What then can be alledged in vindication of a female gamester? — Why truly nothing, but that it is the mode, and without play they should make but awkward figures at a route, or a drum-major; — the example of some few leading ladies influences the rest, and a polite mother makes it the chief part of her daughter's education: — Miss must read Hoyle instead of the Bible; — study the rules of Whist before those of her Catechism; — and be confirmed as a Gamester before she is confirmed as a Christian.

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This vice has indeed taken so deep a root, especially among well-bred people, that despairing of a reformation, I was in some debate within myself whether I should mention it or not; but when I considered that there were some few whom the contagion had not taken hold of, I thought it an indispensable duty to offer them such antidotes as are in my power.

As I know nothing of more weight with the fair sex than the preservation of those personal charms Heaven has endowed them with, I would have them in the first place reflect, that a continual perturbation of the spirits, joined with the want of repose at those hours ordained by Nature for it, is a most cruel enemy both to beauty and to health, and that this is one of the evils which in gaming are unavoidable.

In the next, let her remember, that while she is not only wasting her time, but wasting it in an amusement which seems followed in mere contradiction to the laws of God and man, as well as to those of reason, she ought not to flatter herself with being under the protection of Heaven; and that a thousand ill accidents
may

may happen in her family at home, which possibly might have been prevented by her presence.

Let her ask herself the question, By what motive she is induced to become a party at a gaming-table? — If it be the expectation of adding some pieces to her purse, is not the danger of losing those she has already there, at least equal to the chance of acquiring more? — If she goes for the sake of company, what satisfaction, what improvement can she propose to receive from the conversation of a promiscuous assembly, who talk of nothing but the grand business of their play; and if influenced only by a desire of complying with the custom of the present age, let her consider that there are many pernicious customs, besides gaming, which late years have introduced among us; and that if she would be entirely in the fashion, she must also abandon herself to some others yet more shocking to a new practitioner in vice.

There is no act of licentiousness, indeed, to which gaming is not an introduction; — it opens a door to such enormities, — such scenes of vice, as I hope there are a great many of my readers who would shudder at the bare description of: — for
their

their sakes I shall therefore proceed no farther on so disagreeable a subject, and leave the mischiefs which frequently attend an attachment to this destructive and misnamed diversion, to the imagination of every one to suggest.

What can a husband think of a wife who wilfully runs herself into dangers of the most dreadful kind, and which if she escapes, it may be looked upon as a kind of prodigy, and leaves her no room to boast that it is either to any consideration of her own character, or her husband's honour or peace of mind, she is indebted?

But it is not to those who are already far entangled in the fatal snare that I am directing this discourse, — those I look upon to be incorrigible; and perhaps one great motive of their being so, is a self-conviction of their fault: — some are above repentance, and chuse to persist obstinately in their errors, not so much because they still like them, as because their pride will not suffer them to acknowledge, by a reformation, that they have ever been to blame. — To persons of this unhappy disposition all lessons would be ineffectual; — nay, they would rather be hardened, than any way amended either by remonstrances or reproofs.

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It is those, who being at present entirely free, yet through the prevalence of example, the persuasions of others, or their own inadvertency, are liable to be drawn into this vice, whose eyes I would attempt to open, and make them see the dangers of that precipice they are about to climb, before they reach too near the brink.

In the first place, I would have them reflect on the low shifts to which a woman who plays much is frequently reduced;—how, after an evening's ill-luck, in order to discharge what they call a debt of honour, her jewels, plate, and sometimes a birth-day suit, are exposed in the shop of a common pawnbroker, and there deposited among the dirty rags of the most abject wretches who are obliged to strip their backs to supply the necessities of their stomachs:—this, tho' the least of all the numerous train of evils to be apprehended from gaming, should, methinks, be sufficient to deter a woman of any delicacy from pursuing it.

But let her carry her ideas yet a little farther;—let her well weigh what it is, — that besides her money she is about to hazard, no less than her reputation in
the

the world, — the whole happiness of her life at home, — her husband's honour, — her own peace of mind, and perhaps her virtue too : — some of these are forfeited by being staked; and all the others depend but on the turning of a card, and may also be lost beyond a possibility of recovery.

If these considerations are not of force to restrain her from enrolling herself in the list of female libertines, — (for a female gamester is no other), — we may justly conclude, that she is pleased with destruction, and proud to sacrifice to that idol, fashion, whatever is truly valuable in womankind.

SECT.

S E C T. V.

*Sloth, and the bad Effects of it, especially
in a married Woman.*

I Think the Roman Catholicks rank Sloth among the number of the deadly sins: — how far it deserves that epithet, I leave to the decision of the churchmen; but of this I am certain, that sloth in a wife is a mortal sin against her husband, when employed by him in any affair which requires dispatch, and even in the most trifling things ungrateful and disobliging.

When this disposition is inherent to the nature of a person, and born with them, it can never be so thoroughly eradicated, but that some remains of it will still appear in all they do or say; every look, every gesture, every word they speak betrays it. — The earthy mass of which they are composed wanting a sufficient quantity of air and fire wherewith to invigorate, it seems mere matter put in motion in exterior causes, and uninformed within; — but as the sluggish body contains a soul endued with reason, and

capable of reflection, the utmost efforts should be exerted for supplying, as much as possible, the deficiencies of the animal spirits, otherwise the lump would sink to its center, and while alive be numbered with the dead.

Though such a one may be pitied, they never can be loved; it therefore behoves a wife to omit nothing in her power to rectify this defect; — in order to which, she ought not to indulge herself in any one thing, — for ease and plenitude increase the malady; — she ought to take much and laborious exercise, — sleep very little, — eat sparingly, and live always in the open air; — this regimen may contribute somewhat towards a cure, tho' not totally effect it.

But all this may be looked upon, and indeed pretty justly, as a needless digression, since nature in this case is seldom so much to blame as education: — some parents love their children so well as to ruin both their constitution and understanding; — they suffer them to eat, drink, and sleep as much as they will; — they set them about no exercise, which might either rouse the faculties of the mind, or give strength or vigour to the body,

body, for fear of giving them pain; but let them grow up in a constant habit of sloth, till it becomes a second nature in reality.

A woman thus trained up ought, however, after she is married, to consider that a very different manner of behaviour to what she has been accustomed to, is now expected from her; — that she has a husband to oblige, — a family to manage, and probably other avocations which equally demand her attention, and if neglected, cannot fail of drawing on her the reproaches of her husband, the disrespect of all his friends, and the ridicule of those women, who either are, or would pass for, better judges of what is becoming in the character of a wife.

There are but very few men, and those none of the wisest, who marry with no other view than that of gratifying an amorous inclination; — a woman therefore, how beautiful soever her person may be, must be extremely weak in her intellects, who can imagine she is placed at the head of a family like a fine picture, or a china jar in a drawing-room, merely for ornament, without being of any real service.

What degree either of affection or esteem can that wife hope for from her husband, who, when enjoined by him to do any thing, provided it be not inconsistent with their circumstances and way of living, instead of a ready compliance, makes answer, —that she cannot do it, —that she was not bred to it ; — and on his insisting on the performance, presently falls a-crying, —complains she is hardly dealt with, — wishes she had never been married, — and such like stuff, which he with much more justice might retort on her.

It is also very near as disagreeable, when he finds himself obliged to reiterate his commands, that at last she submits to them with reluctance, — makes childish excuses for unnecessary delays, — and puts off from time to time affairs which, it may be, require the most immediate dispatch.

Persons in an elevated station have not the same trials with those in a lower sphere of life, because they have not the same occasion to exert their activity ; yet as they may find a great many pretty ways to employ themselves, without derogating at all from their dignity, sloth is as little to be excused in them as in the meanest ;
and

and the fine Lady Lollup in her coach-and-six is full as disagreeable to her lord, as plain Mrs. Lollup behind a compter is to her honest citizen.

In fine, sloth is so detestable a quality in a wife, that no man can enjoy the least happiness with one possessed of it to any great degree: — whether therefore it be owing to a certain heaviness in the blood, or has been contracted by a long ill habit, that woman must be strangely wanting to herself, who does not endeavour with all her might to shake it off; which I am far from thinking impossible to be effected, by the help of a steady resolution joined to the methods I have taken the liberty to prescribe.

L 3

SECT.

S E C T. VI.

*The Weakness of giving Encouragement to
Tale-bearers of every Sort.*

JUSTLY as the times are complained of, and bad as the world is, there are yet people who perfectly resign to the will of Heaven in public affairs, and, content with their own lot in private life, might be accounted happy if their peace was not frequently interrupted by reports, which, whether true or false, had better never have reached their ears; but the arch-enemy of mankind, well knowing that animosities and disunion among friends prepare the mind to receive his black impressions, employs all his agents upon earth for that purpose. — Swarms of informers, besides those paid by the court, and who take as much delight in mischief, haunt every assembly, insinuate themselves into every family they can, and depart not without leaving behind some portion of their venom.

Persons who are thus forced, as it were, or cajoled into the knowledge of things which they neither sought after, nor wished
to

to be made acquainted with, are greatly to be pitied; but what shall we think of those who hunt for intelligence, and are impatient to be told whatever is said of them in the world, but that they are weary of quiet, and long for something to involve them in perplexities?

—I am sorry to observe, that the women in general have a good deal of this propensity in their nature; but what liberty soever the unmarried may be allowed to take in thus hazarding their peace of mind, I would fain persuade every one who is a wife, from giving the least indulgence to so dangerous a curiosity; because it is not her own happiness alone, but that of the person who is, or ought to be, most dear to her on earth, which may possibly be affected by it.

Tale-bearers are the pest of all society; and more to be guarded against than a thief, who only robs you of your money; but the other of what is infinitely beyond all treasures, — your repose; — nay, of your justice and good nature too, by inspiring you with the worst opinion of those who may perhaps deserve the best: — they begin with dark hints and innuendoes to excite your curiosity, and when they find it raised to a pitch proper for

their purpose, either forge, or magnify some idle story to make you become suspicious of your dearest friends, doubtful of your servants, and even jealous of your husband's fidelity.

Though certainly nothing can be more absurd in itself, than to desire to know what when known must give us pain; — yet so it is, — a woman who has once given ear to these incendiaries, cannot forbear asking a thousand questions; — entreats them to find out the whole of what they pretend they have as yet been able but to reveal in part; — and thus affords them fresh opportunities of imposing on her credulity.

I happen'd once to be in a good deal of mix'd company, when two young ladies singled themselves from the others, and withdrew to a window; — I was near enough to hear their discourse, which I shall present my readers with verbatim, to shew the manner in which people of this turn of mind begin to infuse their poison.

‘I could tell you something, my dear,’
 ‘but that I am afraid it will vex you,’
 said the first. — ‘Why, what is it
 ‘about?’ demanded the second. — ‘It

is

‘ is no matter; for I am resolved not to speak a word of it,’ replied the first. — ‘ That is unkind, if it concerns me,’ so pray don’t make a secret of it,’ rejoined the second. — ‘ Indeed I must; for I am sure it will give you pain,’ said the first. — ‘ Indeed it shall not,’ return’d the second. — ‘ Nay, it is fit you should know;—so if you will promise me not to fret I will tell you,’ resum’d the first. — ‘ That’s my dear creature.—Come then, for I am quite upon the rack,’ cry’d the second eagerly, and with these words took hold of her arm and hurried out of the room.

On their return, the lady who had been told the secret, whatever it was, seem’d very much disconcerted, and the other more gay and alert than before;—so cruel a pleasure have some people in giving pain!

In my mind, there cannot be a greater weakness under the sun, than when a person discovers an impatience to know what has been said in their absence by such or such-a-one:—many things may be spoke which are far from having any ill meaning in them; but by being repeated through the mouth of another will bear a quite different signification:—so

that though the intelligencer tells nothing but the truth, the truth may be so far disguised in the wicked and designing manner of relating it, that the hearer may be deceived into a resentment which has no foundation in justice or reason.

Many great feuds and lasting dissensions have happened in families, merely through the readiness of one among them to listen to the reports of these tale-bearers; — a wife therefore should be particularly careful never to give the least encouragement to any one who offers to entertain her with discourses of this nature; for as scandal gathers like a snow-ball, the most trifling words and actions, by passing through many mouths, may swell to an enormous bulk, and seem of consequence enough to produce even the most tragical events.

S E C T A VII.

Behaviour towards a Husband, when labouring under any Disappointment or vexatious Accidents.

I Have often observ'd, that people of very high spirits are not so well able to support the weight of misfortunes as those of a more moderate flow: — the men therefore must forgive me, when I say that the softer sex, being by nature less swain and violent, bear away the palm from them in the atticle of patience or fortitude; for these I take to be synonymous terms. — The men rave and storm at the first onset of ill-fortune; but on a series of cross accidents sink and are quite depress'd; — few have that happy equanimity of temper as to look with the same eye on the good and the bad success of their affairs.

Philosophy, indeed, teaches different things; but there are not many who, in these latter times, give themselves much pains in the study of that science; and those who do are too apt to neglect this most necessary and valuable branch of it.

A wife, therefore, who has by nature what it is a thousand against one if her husband has acquir'd by precept, should never be an idle spectator of his discontent on any of those losses and disappointments which the vicissitudes of human life seldom fail to inflict, even on those who are accounted most happy;—it is then her time to exert all her wit, —display all her tenderness, —double all her assiduinies about him, and omit nothing which may keep melancholy from seizing too deeply on his mind.

As she must bear her share in every calamity that threatens him, the arguments she makes use of for his consolation will have infinitely more efficacy than any could be offer'd by a person less interested in his fate:—he will admire the greatness of her soul, and at the same time call to remembrance these words of the poet

‘ To rise against oppression, —scorn to

pay
Philosophy, indeed, teaches
‘ The tribute to adverse fortune;

‘ And bear with equal soul her frowns and
‘ smiles;

‘ Is the true proof of virtue.’

Indeed,

A wife

Indeed, whenever I see a noble mind struggling beneath a load of woes, yet still maintaining its native dignity, methinks a certain glory shines about that person, which deserves, as well as attracts our admiration, more than all we could discover amidst the tinsel glare of proud prosperity; and here I cannot forbear inserting a very just and elegant simile which Mr. Cowley makes on this occasion:

So tho' less worthy stones are drown'd in
 night,
 The faithful diamond keeps his native
 light,
 And is oblig'd to darkness for a ray,
 That would be more oppress'd than help'd
 by day.

But the true beauty of that behaviour which I should be glad every wife would observe, will best be shewn by the disagreeable contrast which some women put in practice, adding thereby to the sorrows which it is both their duty and their interest to alleviate.

Though the wisest and best concerted schemes may, and often do, fail of the expected success, the world is so ungenerous

nerous and unjust as to lay the whole blame on the suffering conjuncture, and virulently condemn those very methods of proceeding, which, if prosperous, would have been applauded as the highest acts of human prudence;—so true are Mr. Dryden's words:

'When things go ill, each fool presumes
't advise,
'And if more happy, thinks himself more
' wife.'

But how much beyond expression shocking is it when a wife shall take this liberty!—when instead of softening his afflictions by her endearments,—endeavouring to inspire him with hopes of better fortune, and to persuade him that the present is not so bad as imagination paints it,——the cruel creature, forgetting all love,——all pity,——all decency and good manners, reproaches,——reviles him,——accuses his conduct of folly and madness,——wishes she had never seen his face,——curses the hour that join'd them,——complains of fate for having involv'd her in his ruin; or exaggerates the misfortune they labour under,——and forms all the ideas her invention can supply her with of yet much worse to come!

To

To what extremes may not a man be reduced by a treatment of this sort?— If of a soft and gentle temper, it may probably drive him to despair;— If of a more harsh and rugged one, to actions which no provocations on her part could justify in a person of his sex to one of her's.

The least bad consequences that could attend such a behaviour would be the most violent and frequent quarrels between them, succeeded by grumblings and mutual discontent;— words sometimes cut deeper than a sword, and the wounds they make are with more difficulty heal'd: his heart would retain an indelible impression of her reproaches; whatever affection he had for her would be extinguish'd; nor would all her submission, in case she repented, be scarce able to rekindle it.

It must certainly be owing to the want of reflection that can make a woman thus draw upon herself a worse misfortune than any she could sustain through the mistakes or ill conduct of her husband;— nor may the total loss of his affection be all that may possibly ensue;— it would be a thing much to be wonder'd at, if the breach

breach between them did not make him run into excesses, which in the end would compleat the ruin of them both.

But I have now done with a portraiture which cannot afford any satisfaction to my fair readers; and after having presented them with a small sketch of a most amiable reverse, shall conclude a subject, which, according to the best of my judgment and observation of the world, cannot be too much consider'd by them.

In the beginning of that too memorable year, in which the failure of the Charitable Corporation ruined half those who had not been before undone by the fatal South-Sea scheme, a gentleman of a considerable estate in Wales was married to the daughter of a wealthy merchant in London, with whom he had a fortune of seven thousand pounds.

This money, which he at first intended should pay off a mortgage, with which some part of his estate was encumber'd, he rashly embark'd, and lost in the above-mention'd fund; — he felt this misfortune the more severely, as he had brought it on himself, without the knowledge of his wife or of her father. — His mortgage was also a secret to them; — and
when

when these two things should come to light, as he knew they must do by the impossibility he should find of continuing to live in the fashion he had begun to do since his marriage, fear'd the reproaches of those persons whose love and esteem it most concern'd him to preserve.

These reflections threw him into a melancholy, which all his endeavours could not conceal from the penetrating eyes of his wife: — she begg'd to know the cause; — at first he denied there was any, and affected a more chearful behaviour; but she soon saw thro' the thin disguise, and, convinced that some latent grief prey'd upon his heart, renew'd her pressures. — One day, when they were alone, she threw her arms about his neck, and bathing his cheeks with tears, beseech'd, conjur'd him by all the love he had profess'd for her, not to refuse making her the partner of his sorrows. — Overcome with this tenderness, he at last cried out, — — ‘ Oh! my dear, I have wrong'd you, — wrong'd you beyond forgiveness! — and can I be the reporter of my own transgression?’ — ‘ I believe it among the things impossible,’ replied she, ‘ for you to do wrong to any one; and am sure it is yet more so for you to do any thing which my love would not forgive.’

He

He could resist no longer, but after a few struggles within himself, repeated to her the whole of his affairs:—she listened to him with attention, — seemed a little surpriz'd; but discover'd not the least emotions either of grief or resentment: — and when he had given over speaking, said to him, — ‘I confess, my dear, that these are misfortunes, yet cannot think them of sufficient weight to depress your spirits in the manner they have done.’ — ‘How, my dear!’ return'd he, — ‘Do you not consider that by this cursed accident I am depriv'd of the means, for some time at least, of supporting you in the manner I ought to do, and you have a right to expect, when you made me happy in your possession?’ — ‘We must lay down our coach.’ — ‘Do you imagine,’ resumed she, with the most obliging smile, — ‘that I have so much pride, or so little love, as not to be as well content with walking as with riding, while I have you by my side?’ — ‘Oh! but,’ cried he, ‘What will your father say?’ — ‘I am not,’ she answered, — ‘I am not so much concerned for his opinion.’ — ‘Oh this she fell into a little pause, but soon coming out of it replied, — ‘As to my father, I know he looks upon these public schemes as mere bubbles, and the

‘ the aversion he has to them may make
 ‘ him accuse you of some imprudence ;
 ‘ for which reason he shall not know of
 ‘ it ; — I have thought of an expedient
 ‘ that will solve all.’ — ‘ Heavens !’ cried
 he, ‘ what expedient ? — Will not the
 ‘ very change in my way of living be-
 ‘ tray my folly to your father ?’ — ‘ I
 ‘ will tell you, my dear,’ answer’d she ;
 ‘ we will quit this expensive town, and
 ‘ live at your country seat till your affairs
 ‘ are entirely clear’d.’

I should have inform’d my reader, that
 this lady had so great an aversion to the
 country that before marriage she had
 exacted from him the most solemn promise
 never to take her down to Wales ; he
 could not, therefore, be otherwise than
 amaz’d on hearing her make this offer.
 ‘ Is it possible,’ said he, ‘ that you can be
 ‘ in earnest ?’ — ‘ Entirely so,’ answer’d
 she ; — ‘ and if you approve it, will go
 ‘ to-morrow to my father, and tell him
 ‘ that I have a curiosity to see your
 ‘ estate, and will pass some time in Wales
 ‘ for that purpose : — he will not sus-
 ‘ pect the truth of what I say, and when
 ‘ we get there I can pretend to him, by
 ‘ letters, that I like the place so well that
 ‘ I cannot think of leaving it ; — so will
 ‘ this misfortune be always a secret to
 ‘ him

‘ him and every one else you would conceal it from.’

‘ But can you, — can you, my dear,’ said he, not yet recovered from his consternation, — ‘ can you resolve to absent yourself from your father, and all those other relations to whom your company is so justly precious? — Can you forego your native air, and quit all those pleasures, those gay delights this town affords, and which from your infancy you have been accusom’d to enjoy? — Can you do this, and consent to live a voluntary exile among rocks and barren mountains?’

‘ Without the least reluctance, when you are my guide and my companion; resum’d she. ‘ Paint not, therefore, the place of my retreat in any direful colours; — I have already form’d the most delightful idea of it: — I shall forget the music of the Opera, while attentive to the notes which Heaven has taught the little choristers of the air; — the frisking kids and sportive lambkins on the mountain tops, or coursing each other through the vales, will afford me more diversion than all the Balls and Assemblies in the Hay-market; and the sincere welcomes of our honest tenants
‘ and

“and their ruddy dames, will please me
“much better than the unmeaning com-
“pliments of fops and fools.”

It was the husband of this charming woman who was the relater of this story to me : — he said, that on hearing these expressions from her he was so overcome with rapture, that he could not forbear catching her in his arms, and crying out in the poet’s words,

“ Sure there is in thee all we believe of
“ Heaven,
“ Amazing brightness, purity, and love !”

She kept her promise in every particular with the same chearfulness she had made it, and dispatch’d every thing necessary for their departure with so much expedition and alacrity, that in less than a week the happy pair set out for Wales. — On their arrival, the resolution she had taken to be pleased with whatever she found there, render’d her so in reality ; — the country, by degrees, became as agreeable to her as it had once been irksome ; and the remembrance of the noise and hurry of the town gave her rather a disgust than a desire of returning to it : this she not only declar’d, but testified by
re-

requesting her husband to continue where they were after the mortgage was redeemed, which they still do, coming only to London once in three or four years, to visit the kindred they have here; and their stay never exceeds a month or six weeks at a time: — they are now the parents of a numerous offspring, and live blest in each other, lov'd and respected by their neighbours, and almost ador'd by their tenants and dependants.

I believe there is no wife but will applaud the virtues of this lady; but if there are not some who do not endeavour to become her imitators in such circumstances as shall give them an opportunity, my design in writing this section will be wholly frustrated.

SECT.

S E C T. VIII.

Sleeping in Different Beds.

I Doubt not but what I have to say on this head will be thought to deserve the thanks of some, and be as highly disapprov'd by others. — I wish the number of the latter does not by far exceed that of the former; but as I profess the utmost sincerity thro' this whole work, and write for the common good of all, I shall freely give my opinion without any regard to the favour or displeasure of individuals.

For a husband and wife to sleep in different beds, except in case of indisposition, would have, in somewhat less than an hundred years ago, appear'd so strange a thing as to have occasion'd many whispers and surmises on the cause; but tho' custom has render'd it more familiar, I hope the day will never come when the example of a few, who would be thought more polite than their neighbours, shall have influence enough to introduce it as the general mode; for I am perfectly convinced, both from reflection and observation, that a separation of beds paves the way

way for a separation of hearts, — a separation of interests, and at last a total separation of persons. T O I 2

Such a proposal coming from a husband would very ill agree with the fine speeches and passionate declarations he made to his wife before marriage; and as it would give her just room to suspect both his sincerity and affection, I think she would be at liberty to reproach him for it, provided always that what she says on that account, or indeed on any other, is accompanied with good manners, and expressed with tenderness.

But tho' I am ready to allow the inconstancy and caprice of some men's nature makes them soon grow weary of an object they lately sought after as their supremest happiness, yet the shame of being accused of such a disposition frequently restrains them from giving any glaring proofs of it; and I believe it will be found upon examination, the ladies, for the most part, are the first aggressors in this point.

Nothing is more common than for a wife, on having the least piquant words with her husband, to refuse sleeping with him that night; — but this, methinks, is strangely

strangely impolitic : — the reason of its being so is plain, and must be obvious to every one's capacity ; — he either loves her, — or he does not love her : — if the former, his love will certainly be wean'd by this behaviour being frequently repeated ; — and if the latter, it will give his indifference a good excuse for continuing what she begins ; — so that which way soever his heart has been affected towards her, they will in time become entirely aliens to each other.

I once knew a lady of no small condition, who sadly experienced the truth of what I am speaking on, and instead of being as happy as fortune intended her, or as a woman could be, is now, thro' her own fault, divested of all the gay delights of life, and fills a mournful widow'd bed, her husband yet alive. — The fact was this :

She was young, vain, and capricious to an excess when she was first made a wife, nor did that name work any alteration in her humour : — she loved the person she married ; but thought she might treat him, when her husband, in the same manner she had done when her lover : — she imagin'd that she had his heart in chains, and took a pride in the exercise of her power. — It gave her an exquisite satisfaction to observe the melancholy

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she

she sometimes involved him in by an affected reserve, and the raptures he expressed when she surprized him with a return of fondness. — Among the many ways with which she tried his patience, she often took it into her head to oblige him to lie in another chamber for two or three nights together, nor would receive him to her arms 'till he had purchased the dear-bought blessing with vows, tears, and all the submissions he had practised while making his addresses.

The affection he had for her was doubtless very ardent and sincere, and that enabled him to support this behaviour much longer than any one, except herself, could have expected :—the love he had for her person; however, at last gave way to the just contempt he could not help feeling for her follies, which he resolved no more to indulge, and also to lay hold of the first opportunity to let her know his mind.

It was not long before she presented him with one, —and he then plainly told her, that he did not marry to be the dupe of any woman's idle whims ; — that he had been an ass too long ;—and was both surprized and ashamed to think he had endured, even for two days, such ridiculous behaviour in a wife.

The

The consternation she was in at hearing him speak in terms to which she had been so little accusom'd, and was so far from expecting from him, prevented her for some moments from making any reply; and when she did, it was not to vindicate her conduct, or promise any amendment, but only to upbraid him with some of those unmeaning protestations which men ordinarily make in their days of courtship. — He seemed quite unmoved at all she said, nor offered the least interruption; which enraging her the more, she clinch'd her hands together in the extremest agony, crying out,—‘Ungrateful man! I could find in my heart to make a vow never more to enter into the same bed with you.’ — On this he assumed a contemptuous smile, and rejoined, — ‘With all my heart, madam; — I shall never attempt to make you break your resolution; — you have accusom'd me so much to lie alone, that now I chuse it.’ — With these words he left the room hastily; — she called to him to stay, but he regarded it not, and went directly out of the house.

He came not home 'till very late that night; she sat up to wait for him, and meeting him on the stair-case desir'd to speak with him; — to which he reply'd, that it

liking he had for her presently became more serious, and he afterwards neglected no opportunity of persuading her to be his ———. ——— She had not virtue to resist the offers he made ; — he gained his point, and whenever he lay apart from his wife, she supplied her place in his arms, as she had done in his heart.

Certain it is, that he had now more than an indifference for his wife; the possession of a new object, who wanted neither beauty, wit, nor artifice to engage him, quite effaced all the tenderness he once had for the former, and nothing remain'd but the cruel remembrance of those follies, which, while he continued to love her, had made him ashamed of doing so.

The next conference they had together served rather to widen than make up the breach ; nor did any of those which afterwards pass'd between them for several days produce a better effect ; ——— he both seem'd, and really was, quite indifferent as to a reconciliation; and she was too haughty to make the first overture, though, as she has since confessed, she passionately desir'd it.

Things were in this situation between them, when a servant having discover'd

the chamber-maid's intrigue with her master, acquainted her lady with it, and put her in a way how to surprize them ; — she did so, and the manner in which she behaved may easily be conceived. — Had the maid been within her reach she would doubtless have given her lasting marks of the fury she was possessed of ; but the girl was too well defended by her lover, who, after forcing his wife out of the room, made his footman procure two chairs, and went with his mistress to a bagnio, where he staid with her the remaining part of the night, and the next morning placed her in handsome lodgings, with an assurance of supporting her in a manner agreeable to her wishes.

After this no measures were observed between the wife and husband ; — she spared no revilings on his perfidy ; — he made no excuses for what he had done, but laid the blame wholly on her : — there was not the least interval of peace between them, — no order, — no decency preserved ; — they seldom eat at the same table, — never slept in the same bed, nor spoke to each other but to exchange affronts.

Their way of living together was soon no secret ; — the friends on both sides interposed their good offices ; but finding it

it impossible to bring about a reunion of their hearts, at last advised a separation of their persons : — to this the husband readily agreed, and the wife had too much pride to shew any desire of continuing with a man whom she thought she had so much reason to complain of.

The same pride buoy'd up her spirits after their parting for some time ; but more serious reflection afterwards setting before her eyes, in their true light, the errors she had been guilty of, threw her into a deep melancholy, which has rendered her scarce to be known for what she once was.

Though it is certain that the conduct of this husband has not been altogether excusable ; yet it must also be acknowledged, that the follies and insufferable caprices of his wife were the original cause both of his fault and her misfortune.

It is worthy the observation of every wife, that among all the follies this lady was guilty of, that of refusing to sleep with her husband prov'd of the worst consequence ; and considering that tho' the same behaviour may not always draw on the same event, yet as the thing in itself is bad, and contrary to the marriage

institution, it never can be attended with any good.

Whenever I see a husband and wife live in different apartments, seldom meet but at the times of eating, and when the meal is over rise and pursue their several inclinations, they appear to me only as two tenants, or boarders, in one house ; — not as persons who are but one flesh, and ought to have but one soul : — by what motive soever such persons were induced to enter into the marriage state, they certainly desire to be thought to live in a manner as little like it as they can.

Methinks the custom of lying apart is so much against the interest of the ladies, that I am amazed any one of them should be inclined to promote it : — if a wife has any remonstrances to make to her husband, — any boon to entreat of him, what time so proper as the silent night, when she has him entirely to herself, secure from all the interruptions, business, and distractions of the day, and she has a full opportunity to urge all the arguments she can, and by her endearments to win him to attention ?

I would not have any body infer from this, that I am recommending, according
to

to the trite phrase, a curtain-lecture; — no, — I look on the bed as a place very improper for altercations, ———all there ought to be peace and harmony; but I could wish that every pair, bound by the sacred laws of marriage, would endeavour to live as near as possible to the intention of it, and to think it their happiness, as it is undoubtedly their duty, to be as inseparable as circumstances will admit; — this would be doing honour to the state, and answer to the beautiful description given of it by Milton in these lines:

‘ Hail wedded love ! mysterious law ! true
‘ source

‘ Of human offspring ! sole propriety

‘ In Paradise, of all things common else !

‘ By thee adult’rous lust was driv’n from
‘ man

‘ Among the bestial herds to range ; by
‘ thee

‘ Founded in reason, loyal, just, and
‘ pure,

‘ Relations dear, and all the charities

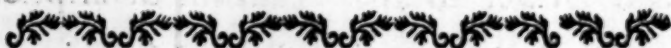
‘ Of father, son, and brother, first were
‘ known !

‘ Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets !

‘ Here love his golden shafts employs, here
‘ lights

‘ His constant lamp, and waves his purple
‘ wings ;

' Here reigns and revels ; not in the bought
 ' smile
 ' Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unindear'd,
 ' Casual fruition ; nor in court amours,
 ' Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or mid-
 ' night ball,
 ' Or serenade, which the starv'd lover
 ' sings
 ' To his proud fair, best answer'd with
 ' disdain.'



S E C T. IX.

What Sort of Behaviour will best become a Wife when finding that her Husband harbours any unjust Suspicions of her Virtue.

I Think there can happen but very few circumstances in the conjugal state, which more severely try the patience of a woman, than to have her virtue unjustly suspected by her husband.—Jealousy is the worst poison of the mind ; and when a man is once infected with it, he is capable of exercising no one domestic good quality, nor can any one live at ease in so unhappy a state as to be within the reach of his influence : — he looks on

on every man that comes into his house as an invader of his honour, and on every woman as an agent for that purpose:—whatever servants he keeps he makes so many spies on the conduct of his wife; and on their not being able to bring him the intelligence he wants, accuses them of being brib'd by her, and in a combination to deceive him.

A man of this disposition will not suffer himself to judge, compare, or weigh the reason of things; but, wholly govern'd by the mad fury that possesses him, turns all he sees or hears into fresh matter for distrust: — as I remember to have somewhere read,

‘ His wild imagination gives the dye,

‘ As all looks yellow to a jaundic'd eye.’

A woman who is so unfortunate to have such a husband, finds it very difficult what method of behaviour to pursue; — her caresses he imputes to artifice, — her reserve to dislike: — if she seems chearful, she has attracted some new admirer; — if serious, taken up with the thoughts of an absent lover: — if she bears with patience his unjust reproaches, it is her guilt that keeps her silent; — if she resents, she is harden'd in her crime:

—if negligent in her dress, she takes no pains to please him; —if curious, it is to charm some other man: —in fine, that there is nothing she can say or do that does not serve, some way or other, to increase his discontent.

Jealousy, however, is not the same in all husbands: — one shall imagine that every man who looks upon his wife has a criminal design against her virtue; — another centers the whole force of his suspicions on a single object; — both these are bad enough. — In the first case I know of no remedy to prescribe for the suffering wife, but to support his injustice with as much temper as she can 'till youth and bloom are gone, and age and wrinkles come to her relief; but in the latter, a prudent management may contribute much towards rendering her situation less perplexing, if not entirely easy.

As in physical cases the cure of the disease lies chiefly in the knowledge of the cause, so when she has once discover'd the person whom her husband looks upon with this evil eye, she must by all means refrain going to any place which she knows is frequented by him, and also be cautious to avoid making the least mention of him in the presence of her husband;

band; because the least favourable word, how much soever he may deserve it, will be interpreted by her tyrant as the overflowings of her love for him; — and if, on the contrary, she speaks with indifference or contempt, what she says will pass with him as a veil to cover her too much affection; — so true is this sentiment of Shakespear,

— ‘Trifles light as air,
 ‘Are to the jealous confirmations strong
 ‘As proofs in Holy Writ.’

But suppose the suspected person to be one with whom her husband is intimate, or has business with, and comes often to their house, as such a thing very often happens, she cannot then behave altogether according to my directions; yet she may notwithstanding do so in part; — she may forbear ever speaking of him when absent, and if she cannot always find an excuse for keeping out of the room where he has been introduced, she may at least have recourse to her work-basket, and seem to have her thoughts and eyes wholly taken up with what she is about.

But as there are always as many different circumstances to occasion jealousy as there

there are persons inflam'd with that pernicious passion, it is impossible to form any summary of advice that may be of service in each particular case; I must therefore leave it to the discretion of every woman to act in such a fashion as the experience she has of her husband's humour may give her reason to think will be most likely to succeed; and only say in general, that as I hope she will regulate her conduct so as to give him no cause to complain of it; she will also, when finding herself unjustly suspected, never fly into extravagancies, nor give any violent marks of her resentment; for clamour and loud words neither become the character of a wife, nor will avail to gain the point she aims at.

I heard a pleasant story of a lady who, on her husband's first testifying some apprehensions of her liking another better than himself, pretended to fall into a violent fit of laughter,— and then taking him round the neck, said to him, —
' Take care, my dear, that you do not
' make me vain. I now think myself
' both happy and honour'd in being your
' wife; but if you are jealous of me I
' shall imagine there is something extraordinary in me; — for you know
' what the Poet says,

' All

‘ All precious things are still possess’d with
‘ fear.’

I was told that, by this merry method, which she constantly pursued whenever she perceived in him any indications of jealousy, by degrees she not only cur’d him entirely of that passion, but also became more endear’d to him by her wit and humour.

This, however, would not have the same effect with a man of a sour and crabbed disposition, but she doubtless was well acquainted with the nature of the metal she had to work upon ; and that is what I would persuade every wife to study, not only in this, but every other respect.

SECT.

S E C T. X.

*The great Indiscretion of taking too much
Notice of the unmeaning or transient
Gallantries of a Husband.*

TH O' I never could find out by the laws of marriage, that a husband was any ways entitled to greater liberties on the score of gallantries than his wife ; yet custom immemorial, even those kingdoms most favourable to women, allows, that what passes only for good breeding and politeness in the one, in the other is accounted coquetry, if no worse.

This, at first, seems a partiality on the side of the men, and I have heard some ladies who have been free enough to complain of it ;—they say, that what is a real error in the one sex ought likewise to be deem'd so in the other, and cry out with Jane Shore in the play, — How unjust it is, that

- ‘ Such is the fate unhappy women find,
- ‘ And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,
- ‘ That man, the lawless libertine, may rove
- ‘ Free, and unquestion'd thro' the wilds of
- ‘ love ;

‘ Bound

- ‘ Bound by no precept, nor confin’d by
‘ rule,
- ‘ While woman, Sense and Nature’s easy
‘ fool,
- ‘ If poor weak woman chance to go
‘ astray,
- ‘ If strongly charm’d she leaves the
‘ thorny way,
- ‘ And in the softer parts of pleasure
‘ stray,
- ‘ Ruin ensues, reproach, and endless
‘ shame,
- ‘ And one false step entirely damns her
‘ fame :
- ‘ In vain with tears the loss she may
‘ deplore,
- ‘ In vain look back to what she was
‘ before,
- ‘ She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no
‘ more !

But notwithstanding that what is condemnable in the one sex, cannot, by mode or practice, be made praise-worthy in the other ; yet the difference of education, and some other causes which might be assign’d, render many things becoming enough in a man which would be highly disgraceful in a woman.

A woman would make but an odd figure at the head of a regiment, or the deck

deck of a ship; — nor would it be less absurd for a man to be found making his own shirts, or tying with great nicety the ribband of his sword-knot; yet could it not properly be call'd a vice if she assum'd the character of a colonel or an admiral; — or he that of a sempstress or milliner; yet would it be a very great fault in both, as it is acting contrary to the designs of Nature, who by forming the one sex hardy and robust, and the other delicate and tender, plainly shews what sort of exercises she meant them to be employ'd in.

But to come more closely to the point, from which I have a little deviated, without intending to do so. — In the affair of love, tho' that passion is mutually implanted in both sexes, yet it doubtless is more natural and becoming in the male to make the first declaration, as they are less timid and more warm by constitution; — this they are early instructed in, and before arrived at perfect manhood, begin to practise amorous glances, tender phrases, and the whole art of courtship on every pretty girl they see; which by the time they are grown up becomes so habitual, that whether with or without feeling a real passion, they cannot forbear continuing a shew of it as long as they live.

The

The case being truly thus, I would not have a wife expect that a man will think himself obliged, because he is her husband, to refrain from all gallantries with others; — no, — he will perhaps say soft things, — write passionate letters, — compose verses, and make presents to a woman whom he may think worthy of his devoirs, and sometimes merely to shew his own wit; all this he may certainly do without having the least design to wrong his wife, and it would, therefore, be the highest imprudence in her to resent it.

I am very sensible that on reading this page, many a woman will cry out, — When a man behaves in this manner, who knows but that the passion he at first but counterfeits may in time be converted into reality? — To which I answer, — that the surest way of turning the jest into earnest is for his wife to make a serious matter of it, and render herself less agreeable by reproaches and ill-humour.

I once had the pleasure of knowing a lady, who on this occasion had recourse to a stratagem no less witty in the contrivance than it was happy in the success; — it was this: — Perceiving her husband, who
was

was a man of great gaiety among the women, discover'd somewhat of a more than ordinary attachment to one in particular ; in order to divert it, and divide his inclinations, if he really had any to her prejudice, was continually inviting to her house all those of her female friends who were remarkable for any fine quality, either of mind or body ; — she made her husband take notice of the beauty of one, — the exquisite shape of another, — the wit and spirit of the third, and expatiated on their several perfections in the most pathetic terms : — this had so good an effect as to efface by degrees, all the impression the first object had made on him, and at the same time convinced her that he had no settled love for any one but herself.

There are a thousand pretty ways by which a woman may endeavour to weaken the too great liking her husband may have conceived of another, none of which bid so little fair for success as that pursued by most wives, upbraiding him with inconstancy and perfidy, and railing at and affronting the object of his real or imagin'd inclinations:

I would therefore have every wife reflect, that such a behaviour may render her so disgustful to her husband, and so
much

much hated by her supposed ill-treated rival, that in mere revenge they may agree together to make her, in fact, as unhappy as she only feared to be, and otherwise never might have been.



S E C T. XI.

The Manner of supporting the Detection of a Husband's Falshood.

TH E R E may be, and I hope are many wives, who will not think the hints I have given for their conduct, either impracticable or unworthy of them to pursue; but I come now to a point which I am afraid will require a greater force of persuasion than I can boast of to reconcile: — it is indeed a circumstance which at once attacks the pride, the love, and the interest of a wife; — and, it must be confessed, is above all others that can befall in marriage the least supportable.

What I mean is the detection of a husband's falshood; — it too often happens, that not the most violent passion before marriage, — not the solemn vow made before the Holy Altar, — not the best qualities

qualities of an amiable and endearing wife, are sufficient either to defend the roving heart of man from receiving the impression of a new object, nor hinder him from taking all the methods in his power for the gratification of his lawless flame.

A change of this nature can seldom be wrought in the heart without discovering itself in the behaviour; — a man who has strongly in his head the idea of an absent woman, can scarce dissemble so well with the present, but that a wife who loves him may easily perceive the difference between a real and a counterfeited tenderness.

Certain it is, that such a shock cannot be sustain'd without an infinity both of grief and resentment; yet would it be a very great indiscretion in her to make shew of either; — she ought rather to play the deceiver in her turn, and to take no less pains to conceal her suspicions from him, than he does to conceal the cause he gives her for them.

To reproach his inconstancy, and accuse him of having entertain'd a passion for some new object, without any other proof of it than barely his coldness to herself, must, in all probability, produce
these

these three bad effects : — first, it would expose her to his contempt ; — secondly, it would give him a pretence for absenting himself from home more than ever ; — and thirdly, it would make her rival, who perhaps always receives him with a smile, still dearer to him.

If chance, or any other means, should bring her to a full detection of his crime, it will even then be the most prudent step she can take to let him think she is entirely ignorant of it ; and in order to prevent him from having any apprehensions of a discovery, she should behave towards him with more tenderness than before, and double all her former assiduities about him ; — this may possibly awaken in him a due sense of his error in wronging so excellent a wife ; — and if not so, it will at least engage him to treat her with all the outward demonstrations of affection.

A wife had need to be extremely cautious not to afford her husband the least excuse for a decrease of that passion he once had for her ; — most men are apt to put pillows under their elbows when transferring their desires from one woman to another ; and believe, perhaps, more than their

their creed, what the most amorous of our English poets, Mr. Cowley, says on this occasion :

- ‘ The world’s a scene of changes, and to
‘ be
- ‘ Constant, in nature were inconstancy ;
- ‘ For ’twere to break the laws herself has
‘ made.
- ‘ Our substances themselves do fleet and
‘ fade :
- ‘ The most fix’d being still does move and
‘ fly,
- ‘ Swift as the wings of time ’tis measur’d
‘ by.
- ‘ T’ imagine then that love should never
‘ cease,
- ‘ Love, which is but the ornament of
‘ these,
- ‘ Were quite as senseless, as to wonder
‘ why
- ‘ Beauty and colour stay not when we
‘ die.’

There are men who can have no settled affection for any woman, yet are eager to enjoy, without distinction, every one they find ready to acquiesce to their desires : ——— such casual amours are no sooner begun than ended, leaving only a little smoke behind, which it is best to let

let dissipate of itself; and it would be great weakness in a wife to enter into any altercations with her husband on a thing which before she can accuse him with he has ceased to be guilty of.

It is doubtless a very great misfortune for a woman to have a husband of a vague and wandering disposition; — some, however, have made themselves pretty easy under it, as I am convinced of by the account I had of a fact well known in the county where it happen'd. — The story is this:

A gentleman of a very ancient family and considerable estate, was married to a lady of beauty, wit, virtue, and good humour; but though he knew and acknowledged the merits of his wife, yet he was a man of so deprav'd a taste, that the most dirty dowdy he could pick up frequently supply'd her place within his arms.

It happen'd when they were at their country-seat, that riding one morning to take the air, as was his usual custom, he met a ragged country wench, with a pair of wallets, or coarse linen bags, thrown over her shoulder; — he stopp'd his horse, and ask'd what she had got there; — to which she reply'd, with a low

and

N

curtsy

curtsy after her fashion, — that it was broken victuals, — that her mother and she had no sustenance but what they got from the charity of the cooks at great gentlemen's houses, and that she was now going home with what they had given her. — ‘You need not be in haste, I suppose,’ said he; — ‘if you will go with me into yonder field, I will give you something to buy you a new gown.’

The poor girl needed not much persuasion to bring her to consent; on which he alighted from his horse and threw the bridle over a hedge-stake, and the girl at the same time hung her bags on the pommel of the saddle, to prevent their coming to any harm; — then follow'd the gentleman a little way out of the road, where they soon commenced and finish'd their amour.

The horse not liking his situation, found means to get loose, and ran directly home; — the lady by chance was at the window when he came galloping into the court-yard; — she was at first a little frightened to see him without his rider; but perceiving the bags, call'd to have them brought to her, and on their being so, was not long at a loss to guess the meaning of this adventure.

She

She then order'd the cook to empty the wallets, and put whatever she found in them into a clean dish, and send it up in the first course that day at dinner; — which accordingly was done.

The husband on missing his horse walk'd home, and brought with him two neighbouring gentlemen whom he accidentally met with in his way; but these guests did not prevent the lady from prosecuting her intention; — the beggar's provision was set upon the table, — remnants of stale fowls, — bones half pick'd, — pieces of beef, — mutton, — lamb, — veal, with several lumps of bread, promiscuously huddled together, made a very comical appearance: — every one presently had their eyes upon this dish; and the husband, not knowing what to make of it, cried out pretty hastily, — 'What's this?' 'What have we got here?' — To which the lady with the greatest gaiety replied, 'It is a new-fashion Olio, my dear; — it wants no variety; I think there is a little of every thing, and I hope you will eat heartily of it, as it is a dish of your own providing.'

The significant smile which accompanied these last words, as well as the tone of voice in which they were spoke, making him remember where the girl had

hung her wallets, threw him into a good deal of confusion; which she perceiving, order'd the dish to be taken away, and said, 'I see you do not like it, my dear, therefore when next you go to market pray be a better caterer.' — 'Forgive this,' cried he, 'and I promise never to go to any such markets more.'

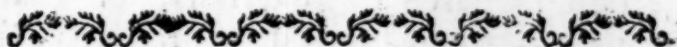
The gentlemen found there was some mystery in all this, but would not be so free as to desire an explanation. — When dinner was over, however, and the lady, after behaving the whole time with all the cheerfulness imaginable, had retir'd to leave them to their bottle, the husband made no scruple of relating to them by what means his table had been furnish'd with a dish of so particular a kind; at which they laugh'd very heartily, and would have done so much more, if their admiration of the lady's wit and good humour had not almost entirely engross'd their attention.

It is nevertheless impossible for all the fortitude a woman can be possess'd of to enable her to bear this disposition in a husband without feeling some secret uneasiness; — yet the trial is infinitely more severe when he devotes himself entirely to one; because his heart then goes with his

his person, — is totally estrang'd, — and if we may believe Mr. Dryden,

‘ To love once past we cannot backward
‘ move.’

This is a terrible circumstance; indeed; — but tears and upbraidings, grief and rage, are equally in vain; and as I have already taken notice, will only serve to widen the breach between them; — all she can do is to endeavour to make home as pleasing to him as possible, — to stifle all her sighs, — and conceal the agonies of a bleeding, breaking heart beneath a face of smiles; — a lesson difficult to be put in practice, yet the only one that affords the least prospect of reclaiming him, or of triumphing over her rival in his affections.



S E C T. XII.

*The Weakness of complaining of a Husband
to Relations.*

IT is a custom very prevalent among the women, that on the least offence, whether real or imaginary, given them by a husband, they immediately run to a father, mother, or whoever is their next

of kin, and make heavy complaints of their ill usage ; — these often take upon them to talk to him upon it, and admonish him to regulate his behaviour for the future in a better manner.

But of all the methods a wife can take for the redress of any grievance her husband may lay her under, this is beyond dispute the most unlikely to succeed ; and she who entertains the least hope of having her condition amended by it, must be little acquainted with the nature of mankind.

Man, generally speaking, for there is no rule that will not admit of some exceptions, is in his disposition haughty, fierce, untractable ; — it is fear alone which, while a minor, keeps him in subjection to parents, governors, or guardians ; — when arriv'd at maturity, if no apprehensions of being hurt by his disobedience prevent him, — he grows insolent, — above controul, and thinks himself at liberty to act as his own judgment shall direct. — How then can it be expected he will submit to any remonstrances made to him by the kindred of his wife ? — No ; if guilty of the faults he is accused of, such lectures will rather harden him to persist in them ; and if not already guilty, make him become so merely thro'

thro' obstinacy; — most husbands are Almanzors in this point, and say with that imaginary hero,

‘ And these things I will do, because I
‘ dare.’

Indeed I know of no one weakness a woman can possibly fall into, which so assuredly loses her the affection, the respect, and every proof even of the goodness of her husband, than this of exposing him to her friends: — the softest, best-condition'd man will not endure it; — he will be apt to tell his wife that he will not be tutor'd like a school-boy; and that he did not marry her to be under the government of her kindred; — in fine, it will turn all the sweetness of his temper into sourness; — all his love into indifference, if not hatred; — all his esteem into contempt, and all his complaisance into austerity and peevishness.

As this is a rock on which so many women have shipwreck'd the whole happiness of their lives, I would earnestly exhort them to forbear ever touching on that dangerous Charybdis. — I have seen many instances of this kind, but never yet found one husband who was either prevented from falling into errors, or reform'd from them, by his wife's having

recourse for that purpose to any other than himself; and that she can only hope it by gentle means, as has been already more than once observed on particular occasions.

It would be easy for me to produce many examples of the terrible consequences that have sometimes attended such a behaviour in a wife, among which the ruin of her own and husband's peace is not the least; — eternal dissention between the families of both, — implacable revenge, quarrels, and blood-shed have not seldom been the dire event.

But it is hard, will some women say, to bear the ill-treatment of a husband without complaining; and to whom should we complain but to those whose nearness of blood will make them pity the injuries we sustain, and do all they can for our redress? — To which I must reply, that it is best not to complain at all, but much the worse to do it to kindred: — complaints to indifferent persons, if not repeated to the husband, can only do no good; but those made to kindred will always do much hurt, and may bring on whatever has the name, or can be conceived of mischief.

I can-

I cannot help acknowledging, that when the heart is over-burthen'd with some great affliction, the weight is somewhat lighten'd by revealing it; and as there is none more insupportable than that which is occasion'd by the bad usage of a husband, it is not to be wonder'd at if the suffering wife seeks some ease from the pity of a faithful friend; — But then it behoves her to be extremely careful that the person be truly such whom she makes choice of for her confidante, — one whose discretion and secrecy she has experienced, and who she is well assur'd will never repeat to her husband, or any other, what she discloses; — on the bosom of such a one, if such a one she can find, she safely may pour out the anguish of her soul; --- but as persons of this turn are pretty scarce, if none among the worthy few fall to her share of acquaintance, I must again advise her to keep her grief concealed, and wait with as much patience as she can, 'till time, and her husband's long experience of her virtue and integrity, shall bring him to a better way of thinking, and gratitude and reason at last compel him to be just.

S E C T. XIII.

The Method which a Wife is justified to take, after labouring for a long Time under a Complication of all manner of Ill-usage from her Husband.

I AM sorry to say, that tho' a woman should be able to fulfil, with the utmost exactness, all the duties of a wife, and which I have endeavour'd in this little treatise to remind her of, yet she may not always meet with a due return from her ungrateful husband; --- but, on the contrary, is treated the worse by him for her virtue, because conscious he cannot treat her so well as she deserves.

Some men are born with such vicious propensities, are so resolute in the pursuit of their own head-strong inclinations, and withal of so harsh and rugged a nature, so inflexible to obligations, that they are equally incapable of being awed by the just censure of the world, or sooth'd by all the proofs of love and tenderness that can be given by a chaste, patient, and endearing wife.

She

She must, however, in spite of the little hope she sees of a reformation, spare no efforts for that purpose : — If the love of play be his predominant passion, in order to save him from the destructive arts of a public gaming-table, she must make frequent parties for that amusement at home : — If addicted to drinking, she must take care to have his cellar well stor'd with the best and richest wines, and never seem averse to any company he shall think fit to entertain : — If fond of women, she must endeavour to convince him that the virtuous part of the sex are capable of being as agreeable companions as those of the most loose principles ; — and this, not by arguments, for those he will not listen to ; — but by getting often to her house, the most witty, gay, and spirited of her acquaintance, who will sing, dance, tell pleasant stories, and take all the freedoms that innocence allows. — To conclude, — she must humour all his inclinations, — fall in with all his passions, and neglect nothing that may serve to make his home more pleasing to him than any other place.

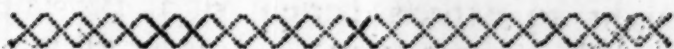
But if, after having essay'd all possible methods of reclaiming him, she finds the attempt in vain ; — if he prefers a hog-

trough to a well decorated table ; ——— if he is never happy but in a gaming-house, a tavern or a brothel ; if he squanders the fortune she has a right to share ; if he despises her kindness, repulses her caresses, maltreats her person, and so distracts her understanding, that she has cause to fear will render her unable to perform the duties owing from her either to Heaven or earth, it is my opinion that she then may begin to think of extricating herself from such a maze of perplexities ; ——— which, as it can be done by no other way than a separation, it is to that she must have recourse.

The parting of a husband and wife has indeed a horrible sound, when we consider the anathema pronouced against all attempts to put asunder persons joined by God ; yet when the devil has taken such full possession of the one, that the other is in danger of being contaminated with his crimes, I cannot think but that the innocent will easily find absolution for breaking so unnatural a conjunction.

It is not a thing, however, that she ought to resolve upon with too much precipitation, nor put in practice of her own head : ——— in this case, and in this alone, she must lay open to the grave and
 pru-

prudent part of her family the injuries she has sustained, and the little probability there is of her condition being ever made more easy by the change of her husband's conduct; and it is by them she ought to be instructed how to proceed in making the best terms she can for herself: — then, as concerning the lawfulness of what she is about, it would be well to consult some reverend and worthy divine of the church, whose advice and approbation might not only satisfy whatever scruples should hereafter rise in her own mind, but also vindicate her reputation to the world.



S E C T. XIV.

How a Woman ought to behave when in a State of Separation from her Husband.

I Have not yet done with my charge: — a wife is still a wife, tho' parted from her husband; nor is she by that separation disengaged from all the duties of her matrimonial covenant, though she is from some of them; — I must therefore put her in remembrance, that her husband is still the man to whom before the altar she promised love, honour, and
obe-

obedience; and though by his unworthy behaviour he has forfeited all title to the two former of these injunctions, and by the articles of separation she is totally freed from the last, yet would it be altogether unbecoming of her prudence or her virtue to express any hatred of his person, or to be guilty of any thing to dishonour him.

Whenever any mention is made in her presence of his faults, it will look well in her to endeavour at giving a different turn to the conversation; but if this cannot be done, and she finds herself obliged to make some answer to what is said, she ought to express herself with extreme modesty on that score, — never railing, nor seeming to take the least satisfaction in hearing others do so.

On being told he is fallen into any misfortune, it is still her duty to lament it, and to do whatever is in her power for his relief and consolation. — I do not mean by going in person to him; for that would be of no real service, but perhaps the contrary, by occasioning altercations which might add to their mutual disquiet; but by employing the intercession of her friends, or her own tongue and pen in his behalf,

behalf, according as the circumstances of the affair shall require.

Thus much I think is due to him. — I come now to what regards her own character in the world. — I would have her consider, that it would be highly inconsistent with her present unhappy situation to indulge herself in any of those pleasures she was accustomed to take, and became her very well when under the protection of a husband; but would now, though never so innocent in themselves, expose her to ill-natured reflections, and might also encourage many attempts upon her virtue by men of amorous inclinations.

I would advise her either to go into the country, or board with some grave relation in town, if convenience permits; — if not, to live extremely retired however, and be cautious even in the minutest articles of life; — she should keep little company, seldom go abroad, — dress very plain, and never in the height of the fashion. — All these things are in her power; and a woman who wishes to preserve her reputation will find no difficulty in observing them.

What

What can we think of a woman, who, parted from her husband, takes greater liberties than ever she had an opportunity of doing when with him, — appears more gay than before, both in her air and habit, — flaunts at every fine shew, — goes to all public walks and places of diversion, — has her lodgings always crowded with visitors, and expends treble the sum she receives as her separate maintenance? — Such a one may possibly be innocent; but we must strain charity to a very high pitch indeed to set her down as such.

The world is apt to absolve the husband of such a woman for whatever fault he may have been guilty of, and lay the blame of their separation entirely upon her: — I hope therefore, that the truly virtuous will never, by so imprudent a behaviour, give any room for their former conduct to be called in question. — And now having, I think, briefly run through all the particulars which demand the attention of a wife, I shall take my leave, promising that if any of them shall think my admonitions too strongly enforced, they will have their full revenge when they read the duties I have enjoined a husband.

F I N I S .

